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In and Around

°Training ‘Employment "#5-2024

Bridging social support and employment integration

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Presenting a compilation of articles about education, training, work and employment in France. This publication is edited by the Centre for Studies and Research on Qualifications, also known as Céreq.

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BRIDGING SOCIAL SUPPORT AND EMPLOYMENT INTEGRATION

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Introduction by Matteo SGARZI

The law 'for the freedom to choose one's professional future', enacted in France on 5 September 2018, has profoundly reformed the vocational training and apprenticeship system in the country. It brought about major changes at all levels: governance, funding, job-insertion support schemes, apprenticeship, employees upskilling and reskilling pathways. Its primary objective was to invest substantially in training and skills to empower individuals to build their own career path and to protect the most vulnerable. In order to achieve this, it provided a new, more inclusive definition of training action, which now includes all 'educational pathways leading to a professional objective', associated with massive investment through the Skills Investment Plan (PIC[1]), which represents an essential financial lever for providing additional resources to the common law schemes that are currently in force in the territories, as well as for promoting innovation[2].

As a result, priority has been given to renewing guidance approaches, and providing tailored support, that can be adapted to each individual situation and problem. These practices are shaking up the scope of the work carried out by those involved in job integration support and are challenging them to develop new tools, to blend their practices and to move beyond their traditional approaches.

The Céreq studies presented in this new issue of In & Around, intended for the English-speaking readership, highlight practices based on an increased demand for adaptability of guidance professionals, particularly when they face populations in need of reinforced support aimed at removing barriers to job integration. These barriers can be of various kinds, including those related to health, social or geographical isolation (and sometimes all three simultaneously), living and family conditions, under-qualification, loss of self-confidence, and many others.

[1]Plan d'investissement dans les compétences.
[2]Initially scheduled to run for 5 years (later extended to 2 more years), the PIC aims to train one million low-skilled young people outside the labour market and one million low-skilled adults and long-term unemployed people; to speed up the transformation of the national vocational training system, starting by identifying current and future skills needs and innovative teaching/learning methods and tools; and to meet companies' recruitment needs, particularly for 'short-staffed' occupations.

The aforementioned diversity of limitations encourages the development of individualized support practices (in training, towards training, towards employment or during a civic service experience) which significantly broadens the spectrum of the skills required by support staff and leads to greater permeability between professional profiles (training, job-integration support, coaching, psychology, adapted education for disabled people, social work, personal development, medico-social support, etc.). In order to achieve this, the structures providing support services endeavour to implement a variety of solutions. These include the deployment of 'multi-task' professionals, multidisciplinary teams, networking and a variety of partnerships forged at the local level and within local communities of stakeholders.

The introductory article by L. Duclos provides a clear overview of the **inclusion policies at work in France**, showing that individual support practices have now become part of the regulations thereby becoming a vector for professional development when the law meets action on the ground. Moreover, the article demonstrates that the 'social work' aspect of the support provided is even more present the further away the beneficiaries are from employment. From then on, support

for job integration is in line with practices for restoring self-confidence in the individual and supporting the (re)establishment of their agency. These practices also go hand in hand with reaching out to the most disadvantaged sections of the population, who are often unknown to public employment services. The article reminds us that empowerment is frequently achieved by putting people in experiential situations (such as those in the workplace) that enables individuals to reflect on their experiences, their own condition and implicit abilities, or those that require development.

The integration of social support and training is also at the heart of the second article by P.-Y. Bernard, V. Gosseaume, K. Meslin, M. Roupnel-Fuentes and J. Walker. An analysis of a support scheme for long-term jobseekers shows the degree of consultation required between the various professionals involved and highlights the need for long-term support to overcome material obstacles and restore beneficiaries' self-esteem prior to any career plan. The article also stresses the importance of local partnership networks, which act as safety nets and provide 'relays to the appropriate structures depending on the difficulties encountered' by each person.

In the following article by J. Bas, C. Galli, L. Gayraud and M. Segon, attention is drawn to the **conditions of access to training for disabled people** and to the challenges posed by their integration into non-specialized training structures open to all. The aim of the project was to meet the challenge of this integration, made possible by enhanced medical and social support, working in concert and in integration with educational support and vocational training. The article illustrates the complexity of these links, the different timeframes involved, the difficulties caused by the dense pace of learning, which is poorly adapted to the characteristics of disabled people, and to which the burden of discrimination can be added. It also highlights the efforts made by support professionals to make the process less arduous and thus reduce the number of drop-outs.

In order to gain further insight, D. Maillard and A. Robert illustrate **young people's access to civic service**. This represents a first professional experience of general interest and citizenship, subsidized by the State, and lasting 6 to 12 months within a wide variety of organizations (public administrations, non-profit organizations, foundations, charities, NGOs or cooperatives).

Despite the fact that civic service is open to all young people, an analysis of educational careers reveals that a 'schooling setback' (repeating a year, diploma not validated at the end of training), and in particular the fact of having been forced to stop studying, are more likely to result in a young person becoming involved. In this way, civic service plays a role in remedying or extending an incomplete educational pathway. The inclusion of civic service among the flagship public policy measures for the integration of young people into the labour market echoes the measures mentioned in the previous articles, where the role of the guidance professional (in this case a tutor) is substantial in building beneficiaries' future pathways.

The latest study, off-topic, by T. Couppié and C. Gasquet, deals with a dimension that can be linked to policies preventing unemployment. The **phenomenon of 'shortage jobs'**, defined as occupations for which the number of job vacancies exceeds the number of jobseekers, is a recurring topic in French public debate. These jobs are often associated with mismatches between job demand and supply in the labour market. In fact, the reasons for these asymmetries are many and often relate to the poor quality of the jobs on offer. The authors look at the recruitment of young labour market new entrants as a source to fulfil these shortages and inquire whether such access can represent a genuine start to a career or rather a transitional stage pending a more permanent and less precarious integration.

To conclude this introduction, it is also worth noting that Céreq's commitment to the upskilling and reskilling topics, particularly for the **less qualified and those furthest**

from employment, has also resulted in the production of a comprehensive Thematic Country Review (RTP) published in several volumes by Cedefop[3]. More specifically, the RTP focused on the implementation of the European Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways[4] through a thematic approach: the system's capacity to integrate and support the low-skilled through didactic and individualized approaches. The issues investigated are those of identifying, (re) mobilizing and supporting low-skilled adults, whether in work or unemployed, analysed from the perspective of cross-cutting issues of system governance, stakeholder coordination and available financial and non-financial support. Readers interested in further detail can refer to the Cedefop website, where they will find the interim and final reports of this major study, which resulted in the production of a series of recommendations addressed to French and European policy-makers.

[3]Available at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5594.
[4]Recommendation of the Council of the European Union on Skills Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (2016/C 484/041).

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Expert's outlook

Active inclusion policies require more diverse support strategies

The uncertain effect of the support practices used in association with active labour market policies – notably involving the structuring of the pathways to employment for vulnerable groups – calls for a wider range of support standards and strategies. In terms of the professional skills required, this diversification could draw on the skills bases in use in social work or on those deployed in support of coordinated speciality care practices in vocational didactics or mental health. It will be seen that the most inclusive support practices share certain qualities with the experiential learning methods used in adult education.

The support function plays an essential role in the implementation of *active labour market policies* (ALMPs). Most of the initiatives put in place by way of support combine incentivising measures or job search support programmes with procedures for monitoring jobseekers' availability and search efforts. French law now stipulates that all jobseekers except those with justified exemptions should devote at least 15 hours per week to these job seeking activities and obliges all jobseekers to sign a "commitment contract" to that effect, which makes the relationship with the organisation providing guidance and support subject to a set of mutual "rights and obligations", the compulsory element of which potentially opens the way for sanctions (Labour Code art. L. 5411-6 amended by Act no. 2023-1196 of 18 December 2023).

As numerous studies based on microeconometric evaluations have shown, the monitoring and potential sanctions – which are usually regarded as a necessary component of the support associated with activation programmes – exert a "threat effect" that not only hastens transitions into employment but can also cause jobseekers, and especially the most vulnerable groups among them, to exit the labour market altogether. When it is shown to have occurred, this expulsion effect is all the more harmful since the strategy underlying active policies and the support measures they call for is precisely to increase individuals' participation in the labour market.

The legislature has addressed this situation by reaffirming the need to support unemployed individuals facing particular social and work-related difficulties and demanding that the public employment service (PES) in particular should adopt a so-called "reaching out" approach in order to seek out those groups that have become "invisible" on account of the interconnection between these expulsion effects and cyclical variations in activity rates. In view of the fact that one in every six recipients of the guaranteed minimum income (*revenu de solidarité active*) is not receiving any career guidance, that a quarter of the recipients have not signed a commitment contract and that one in every five commitment contracts does not include any measures aimed at preparing the beneficiary to engage in the process of job search, the legislature has sought to update the support offered to recipients of this statutory minimum income. There is, after all, no reason why protection against destitution should, at the same time, deprive its beneficiaries of employment opportunities. And moreover, in

terms of budgetary sustainability, the public authorities could hardly stand by and watch as a totally autonomous sphere engaged in the administration of unemployability expanded so unwisely. As the sociologist Michel Autès noted not so long ago, the transition into employment had, for certain groups, become a sort of "moment of eternity".

The management of groups in situations of vulnerability certainly involves giving the support norm (apart from the sanctions regime) some positive content; in the first instance, it requires an ability to properly describe the programme component likely to give tangible form to the support. In June 2016, the *Conseil d'orientation pour l'emploi*/ Advisory Committee on Employment (COE) – an expert consultative body that reports to the prime minister - published a report on "support towards and into employment", in which it recommended, with this in mind, opening up the "black box" of the support provided in the sphere of employment and labour market integration policies.

Prescribing standardised programmes targeting employability

The support function within the PES is usually structured around a set of institutional variables that both feed into the information systems dedicated to monitoring its implementation and constitute the basis for imputing a cost burden. Thus the organisation of the various forms of support is based on:

- a framework, namely the face-to-face interview, that constitute its basic input unit, as it were, hence the attention focused on the size of the "claimants portfolios" assigned to counsellors and the associated workload;
- a frequency count for "meetings", which represents the intensity of a support programme;
- an action frame of reference, usually symbolised by a sequential linear diagram divided into phases that formally marks an individual's progress towards an "employment target" and, if appropriate, specifies the length of the period during which support will be provided defined in terms of "pathway". So-called "intensified" support will include, in addition to more frequent appointments, the addition of upstream phases centred on the "*elimination of peripheral obstacles to employment*". These phases give rise to preliminary social support, in contrast to so-called career support, which focuses directly on the job search.

Entry on to a support pathway in the PES is based on a diagnosis of the "client's risks", which consists of an assessment of the distance from the labour market and an *a priori* evaluation of the client's degree of autonomy in the job search. This diagnosis can be extended to include an investigation into the peripheral obstacles to employment in terms of health, accommodation, transport and family or financial constraints. The assessment of employability, which is organised around fairly general variables and criteria, including age, qualifications and length of time registered as unemployed, is supposed to provide evidence of an individual's *relative* capacity to obtain a satisfactory job, from the PES's point of view, in the light of their personal characteristics, by comparison with the assumed average expectations in the labour market. In this regard, it should be noted that the support should be contextualised, drawing in particular on knowledge of the labour market and its functioning and paying particular attention to firms' business rationales, an aspect that is sometimes underplayed by PES counsellors.

It should also be noted that diagnoses that adopt, *a priori*, the employability criterion tend to inflate the significance of the signalling effect (level of qualification) and of the skills match (training speciality) for pairings and hence to designate training and access to certification – and *a fortiori* attempts to channel jobseekers into "shortage occupations" – as avenues *par excellence* for improving employability. This is evidenced by the successive series of major training programmes and their contents, the most recent incarnation of which, the Skills

Investment Plan (*Plan d'investissement dans les compétences*/PIC), which is aimed at all low-skill individuals looking for work, was funded for five years (2018-2022) to the tune of 13.8 billion euros, which financed 2 million training initiatives. The concentration of actors in the intermediated labour market on the target of "distance recruitment" obviously explains the emphasis on support strategies consisting of "filling out the CV". Since the cost of access to the "education" signal is inversely proportional to an individual's educational capacities, this shared belief in the value of signalling is obviously an important factor in the exclusion of the least qualified, regardless of the level of public investment; this is even more the case when the intermediary does not manage to compensate for the negative effects of signalling by adopting alternative support strategies or putting a positive spin on the particularities of the job offer of the singularity of an individual profile.

The service providers' job consists primarily of ensuring a good match between jobseekers' "profiles" and the kinds of monitoring and support put in place. The corresponding service offer is based on a number of differentiated pathways, with individuals being assigned to a series of standardised programmes delivered as requested either by the PES itself or by an external provider. The programmes include meetings and communications about information media, workshops on getting back into work and CV writing, a module on preparing for recruitment interviews, soft skills workshops, a microcredential or training programme, financial assistance for career plans, transport, etc. Consequently, the guidance and support will consist principally of identifying those individuals likely to meet the eligibility criteria for a particular programme, depending on the number of places available.

As soon as individuals are judged to be capable of acting independently, the support makes their "*capacity to act*" a direct requirement, turning clients into "*actors in their own journey*" and inviting them to incorporate into their own strategies the "off-the-shelf" services that they can assemble in ways that suit their needs. When clients are deemed not to be independent and their capacities for projection judged to be weak, the focus should rather be on developing their "*ability to make use of resources in order to take action*". Thus the approach that is finally agreed in accordance with the activation strategies and the delivery on request of standardised support programmes comes up against individuals' unique personal situations and, moreover, creates an "information fog" ill-suited to supporting their progression, notably because it is impossible to make sense of it.

Increasing individuals' power to act

If it cannot be applied for, this independence has to be (re)constructed. This imperative brings to light other professional points of reference for support providers that are closer to the reference frameworks in use in the social work occupations or to the "recovery" practices employed in mental health. If the support now becomes an assignment to be undertaken jointly – with a "side-by-side" relationship possibly replacing the "face-to-face" interview – and this support has to be given a direction, the progression and the resources on which the individual being supported can draw now over the end goal or the issue of the career plan. These resources are built up as the process advances and individuals' ability to make use of them increases. Such empowerment strategies are subjected first to *authorisation processes*: it is very often necessary for a third-party guarantor to give an individual in a vulnerable situation the *right* to throw themselves into something of which they have no experience, even before procuring for them the *mean*s to do so.

From this point of view, implementation of the support function is no longer based on the administration of the support programmes that are supposed to constitute a "modular pathway" but rather on the establishment of a *relationship* that procures material resources for it. In this new regime, support can be

defined – to quote the clinician Jean-Paul Arveiller – as "*a helping relationship in which the support provider – who is assumed to have greater capacity – shares and supports the expression and the material or human trajectory of the individual they are supporting towards what both regard as progress.*" One condition for the basic felicitousness of such support is, after all, the continued requests for the opinion of the person being supported and the development of their capacities to choose, as defined notably in the principles underlying article D. 142-1-1 of the *Social Action and Families Code,* which compiles all legislative and regulatory provisions bearing on social action and families.

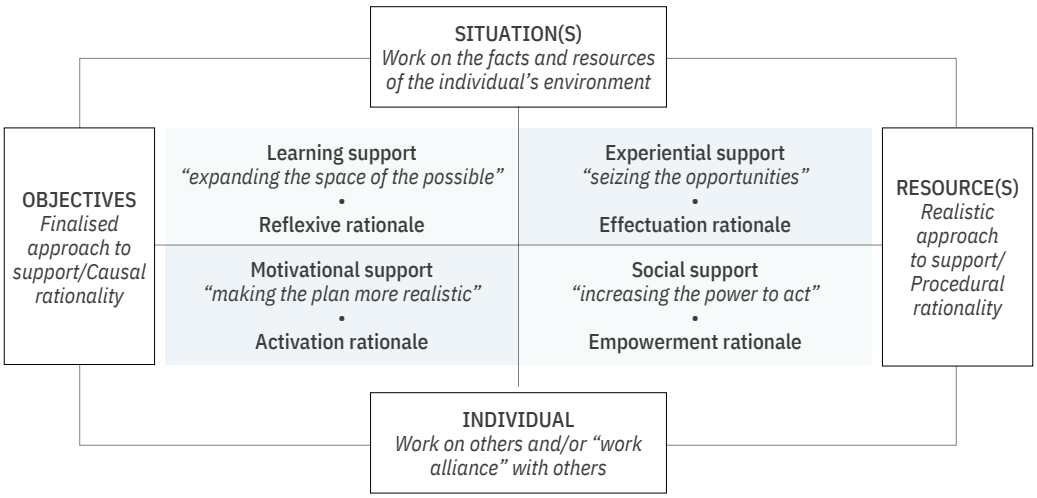
Supporting clients' experience

Nevertheless, this empowerment rationale may, in its turn, come up against certain limits. It may sink into the oblivion of the heteronomous targets the support providers are required to meet (in terms of access to employment or training), or it may fail to be an emancipating experience for their clients, particularly because it is incapable of offering them opportunities and hence reality checks linked to the purpose of the support. Although they constitute a response to the concern to individualise the support programmes, these "person-centred approaches" (PCAs) may fail to produce a truly transformative service; additionally, they may entrap individuals within an essentially empty solicitude, condemning them simply to learning how the support system positioned between themselves and their goals operates.

One way of protecting against this is to establish, in the course of implementing the support function, an "external" reference point, for both the world in which the support is provided and for the clients themselves. This reference point may be established by reconstructing or reconstituting the experiences already undergone (*experientia*), achieved by recalling the situations the individual in question has been through, or by constructing an experience yet to be undergone (*experimentum*) based on the scenarios that arose as the support programme unfolded and which will henceforth constitute the basic material for it:

- In the first case, the aim is to open up the space of the possible by putting in place didactised, reflexive support, the characteristics of which are to be found notably in the specifications for the *Conseil en évolution professionnelle*/Career development advice (pursuant to the

The diversity of support processes



decree of 29 March 2019). This approach is also typical of the good support practices adopted as part of the processes leading to the validation of knowledge acquired through experience.

• The second option also includes a reflexive dimension and hence has didactic aspects, but it is based on analysis of the feedback from the scenarios that arose during actual implementation of the support. In the field of labour market integration, this strategy of supporting clients' experience usually makes use of *work immersion experiences* as described in articles L. 5135-1 et seq. of the Labour Code; in the world of training, it may, in particular, take the form of *work situation-based training measures* (Labour Code, art. D. 6313-3-2). In the same vein, the opportunities to implement the practices with tangible effects deployed as part of the *Solidarities Pact* today constitute a major element in the development of active policies and the PES: see the individual placement and support programmes, the Housing First (*Un chez soi d'abord)* strategy and the *coordinated speciality care* characteristic of the *Tapaj*[1] and *Premières Heures en Chantiers*[2] labour market integration programmes offered by the voluntary association *Convergence France*.

These support strategies are centred not so much on individuals as on the transactions that they may *actually* enter into (or may already have entered into) with an environment from which they draw resources in order to act and which enable them to change the situations they are going through. In particular, they help to enhance their reflexive understanding of the content of their experience, to the benefit of their self-esteem, of their ability to formulate plans and of their commitment, which is a particular issue for so-called vulnerable groups.

Since they involve establishing direct contact with the companies in a locality that are potential employers, the experiential strategies that include work experience placements – or even work-based training – also act as generators of opportunities for groups that have little to boast about on their CVs. They help to strike down the stereotypes that skew the recruitment process, thereby making it possible to bank on the counter-selective, decategorising and destigmatising power of the "contact" effect and to replace the *train and place* models with the the possibilities of *place and train.* Unlike the supplementary social support that is characteristic of the sequential models, the "supported experience" model consists less of "getting individuals into peak condition" than of adopting the effectuation principles in order to reveal, in a given situation, the difficulties of the present. For all that, the possibility of implementing such strategies remains dependent on the ability of labour market integration professionals to establish "mediations' with the companies in a locality, which are necessary in order to reveal (*enactment*) their real needs in terms of skills and recruitment. It should be noted that development of this capacity for "active mediation" has been adopted as a strategic objective of the FSE+ 2021-2027 programme (P.1 /OS H.II).

With regard to the needs of those groups said to be far removed from employment or training, the experiential model is thought of today as a "catalyst" for support, as evidenced notably by the key position accorded to work experience placements in the reform known as *France Travail* that is currently ongoing. What is more, this model is gradually merging with a definition of support in substantive law, a specimen of which can be found in the text of decree no. 2024-99 of 10 February 2024, which is the first instrument implementing the Full Employment Act of 18 December 2023.

[1]TAPAJ – *Travail alternatif payé à la journée* - is a national labour market integration programme for young people in highly vulnerable situations. They are paid on a daily basis for work requiring little in the way of qualifications or experience and to which they do not have to commit them themselves in the long term.

[2]*Premières heures en chantiers* - a return-to-work programme for groups in extremely precarious situations. Participants are offered fixed-term reintegration contracts that enable them to return to work gradually, starting from as little as four hours per week.

FURTHER READING

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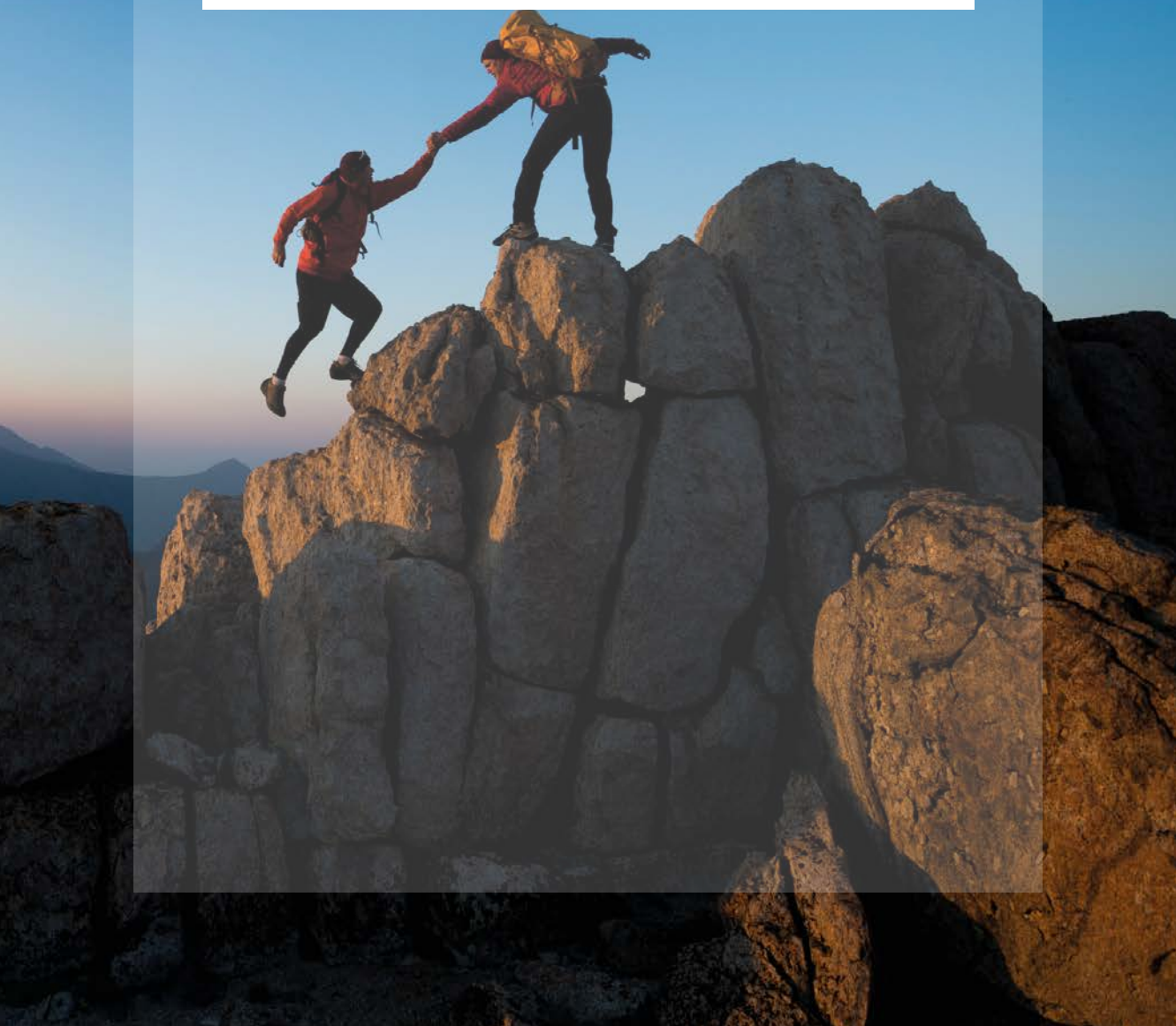

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Integrating social support into training: feedback from a programme at regional level

For those who "have been excluded from the labour market", joining an integration and training scheme is often accompanied by social support, aimed at resolving difficulties linked to their living conditions. A programme set up at regional level has enabled training organisations to experiment with the integration of this social component. Support thus becomes multi-dimensional and individualised, with the goal of reducing breaks and "seams" that can lead people to quit. This Céreq Bref presents a qualitative evaluation of this programme, which provides an insight into its implementation and reception, as well as the factors contributing to its success or failure.

The task of labour market integration and training professionals is to provide the support needed to overcome the obstacles encountered by those excluded from the labour market. A distinction is to be made here between employment support, which concerns the construction of a career plan, the acquisition of skills and the search for a job, and social support, which seeks to resolve a cluster of difficulties regarded as "peripheral obstacles" and which stem from individuals' personal circumstances (problems with health, housing, mobility, etc.). These two types of support can be provided together throughout the entire integration process, in both the prequalification and qualification stages; generally, however, they are provided through two different channels. This edition of Céreq Bref focuses on a trial conducted as part of a regional skills investment pact, in which the social support formed an integral part of a remobilisation scheme that aimed to assist those excluded from the labour market into training or employment.

Backed by central government from 2018 onwards, the regional skills investment pacts seek to offer an improved response to the problems encountered by individuals said to be "excluded from the labour market" by working to make their career trajectories more secure. From this perspective, the integrated *"Prépa rebond"* ("Getting ready to bounce back") scheme combines within the same training offer both the prequalification and vocational qualification stages in order to limit the breaks in individual trajectories. It is also recommended that, alongside the training component, a social support component be included in the scheme. The innovation lies in the integration of this social component, in which a long-term approach is adopted to resolving the social difficulties that trainees encounter by providing both social support and employment support to guide them into training, qualification and employment. The trial scheme presented here (see Box 1) is one example of these so-called innovative training offers. The qualitative evaluation of the scheme [1] (see Box 2) sheds some light on the way in which training organisations incorporate the social support and on how it has been received by trainees. It has enabled us to identify three types of support situation that vary according to the mode of implementation and the trainees' profiles: support that remobilises and provides security, support that has only limited effects and support that fails to mobilise or provide security.

Multi-dimensional, individualised support

Since the 1980s, employment policies have combined intermediation with support work in order to integrate job seekers into the labour market. However, there was a change

1 Presentation of the *"Prépa rebond"* integrated scheme

Developed and trialled in the metropolitan region since March 2020, the "*Prépa rebond*" integrated scheme is a so-called "all-in-one" scheme that aims to combine remobilisation, the construction of a career plan and training leading to a qualification for those persons considered to be furthest from the labour market, aged over 16 and with few if any qualifications. It is implemented in 4 stages as recommended in the project specifications: the screening stage (lasts two weeks, the aim being to identify participants' motivation and to outline the various stages of the scheme to them), the construction of a career plan and its approval, the entry into a training programme leading to a qualification or employment and a follow-up three months after leaving the scheme. The scheme aims to link these stages together "without a break"" for participants by putting in place "seamless" pathways. To that end, the scheme has introduced a number of innovations: an expanded circle of referring bodies in an attempt to reach the most precarious groups, dual support - social support and employment support – provided along the entire pathway in order to limit drop-outs, an attractive remuneration of 850 euros per month for all participants, a fairly lengthy programme lasting up to 18 months as required, the use of teaching and learning tools regarded as innovative in order to win over groups less inclined to learn, extensive coverage in isolated rural areas facilitating access to training programmes and close collaboration between the training organisations providing preparatory courses and those providing training leading to qualifications in order to ensure pathway continuity.

of approach in the 2000s. Since then, the emphasis has been on helping individuals achieve a degree of autonomy in order to develop their ability to contribute to their own employability.

Support programmes aim to equip trainees with the tools and skills required to adapt to developments in the labour market. By assigning a dedicated social support worker to each participant, the *"Prépa rebond"* scheme "formalises the individualised support function by recognising the time-consuming aspect of the work required to overcome the peripheral obstacles to access to training or employment". The teams charged with the task of developing a multidimensional support programme designed to "remove" these "obstacles" emphasise its individualised nature and generally aim to act on various interdependent aspects, such as participants' living conditions, health, mobility and self-confidence.

The social support is envisaged first and foremost as a means of accelerating the process of accessing rights and is intended, through the intense pace of the exchanges, to tighten the "safety net" formed by the social protection programmes around participants. For example, one social support worker acted as an institutional guarantor for Célestin, aged 22, who had been living on the streets before joining the scheme, so that he could obtain a place in a young workers' hostel: "In this case, we were in close contact with the local employment information and advice services for young people and the hostel just to say: 'There you go, the lad's been there for several weeks, it's going well, the situation is stabilising'". In addition to assistance with the procedures involved in making medical appointments or making an application to register as a disabled worker, the health support is intended to be a means of changing the stigmatising attitudes towards health problems. This support work puts physical capacities at the heart of clients' career plans (by considering retraining, for example, the adaptation of work stations, etc.). Similarly, in order to help participants with the rulings on geographical mobility, the support the teams provide often combines an administrative dimension (help in obtaining government assistance to take the driving test or with personal mobility, registration with a vehicle hire association or driving school) with work on attitudes in order to help participants picture themselves in a new place. Working on participants' apprehensions, fears and personal experiences necessarily involves the teams in forging relationships of trust. This is all the more true since the long-term integration into the labour market that

2 Methodology

The survey protocol comprised two phases. In the first phase, the political construction of the scheme and its implementation by the provider organisations were analysed on the basis of documentary work on the project specifications, the training organisations' responses to the invitation to tender and the 19 interviews conducted with funders, lead organisations and the professional staff in the training organisations that responded to the invitation to tender. In the second phase, the scheme's effects on participants' trajectories were analysed in terms both of expectations and perceptions as well as of access to employment depending on their profiles and on the ways in which the provider organisations implemented the scheme. The field work combined repeated semi-structured interviews with 69 scheme participants and 38 professionals (trainers, coordinators and support workers) and observations in three training organisations responsible for implementing the scheme. These qualitative data were supplemented by analysis of the administrative files submitted by these organisations. The assessment was conducted in three areas within a metropolitan region that differed from each other in the extent to which they formed geographical enclaves and in their principal sectors of economic activity. The field work was carried out between September 2020 and December 2021 against the specific background of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Characteristics of the 49 participants surveyed on three occasions:

Sex		Age			Referring bodies					Duration		Access to qualification		Status when surveyed	
M	F	- 18	18 to 25	+ 5	Local youth employment service	Employ-ment service	Employ-ment unit	Training organisa-tion	Other*	- 8 months	+ 8 months	Yes	No	Active	De-parted
30	19	9	21	19	21	10	6	4	8	40	9	14	34	13	36

Example: of the 49 participants surveyed, 21 were aged between 18 and 25 and 9 were minors.
*Other: word of mouth, self-referral.

the scheme is intended to encourage is conceived as arising from individual choices made in full knowledge of the possible fields of employment. However, participants doubt their own capabilities and almost all of them have a negative self-image. The restoration of self-esteem is regarded as a prerequisite for any career plan, which often leads the support staff to work simultaneously on job search techniques and self-discovery and self-expression activities (computer exercises, drama activities, sport). To that end, the support workers are encouraged to create synergies with other local schemes, services and actors but find themselves confronted with the regional inequalities in training provision. While the scheme was conceived as a means of mitigating the lack of training provision in rural areas, it is not sufficient to compensate for pre-existing inequalities. Apart from this dimension, other factors also contribute to the creation of disparities in the provision of support.

Differences in implementation and diversity of target populations

The survey has revealed two types of factors giving rise to variations in the impact of social support: differences in the way the support is implemented, on the one hand, and, on the other, the diversity of the target populations.

With regard to the first aspect, the training organisations have made relatively contrasting choices when selecting the personnel charged with delivering the social support, or rather with "directing [clients] to the appropriate organisations depending on the difficulties encountered"*. This is a task that requires solid knowledge of the resources available in the various areas of social provision in a specific territory. However, it seems that the effectiveness of the support is strongly influenced by the status and qualifications of the professionals recruited.

* Extract from the scheme specifications.

At all the sites surveyed [1], the social support is entrusted to women aged over 40 who have often landed up in the training sector following voluntary retraining. However, this apparent uniformity conceals a diversity of choices made by the training organisations (TOs) with respect to staff qualifications and contract type. At one of the sites, the TO requires its staff to be functionally flexible. Thus the social support worker takes on the role of trainer, devoting one half-day a week to her support role and the rest of her schedule to training proper. Conversely, at the other sites surveyed, the social support and training functions are quite separate and carried out by different employees who are properly qualified for their respective roles (psychologist and employment advisor).

These workers are employed on different types of contract. While one of the TOs surveyed has joined the scheme with a stable team employed on open-ended (permanent) contracts, this is less true at the other sites. In one case, the organisation has opted for fixed-term contracts because of the financial constraints and the difficulties of recruiting staff in rural areas. In the other case, the TO routinely offers fixed-term contracts that run for periods of time shorter than the average duration of the support provided for course participants, which accounts for the high level of staff turnover. However, the professionals require a certain degree of stability if they are to forge relationships of trust and acquire a good knowledge of the resources available in their areas, both of which are prerequisites for the provision of effective support.

The second set of factors giving rise to variations in the support provided is the relative diversity of the target populations in terms of age, gender and labour market experience. As well as individuals who are far removed from the labour market**, other participants tend rather to be on its margins, having had recurrent periods of precarious, poorly paid employment, while a third category consists of early school leavers who have just quit the education system. In other words, the groups regarded as "excluded from the labour market" do not constitute a homogeneous category. There are sub-groups within it who do not perceive the scheme in the same way. For the first and third groups, the training provides a reassuring environment within which they can take the time necessary to overcome the obstacles preventing them from accessing employment; the individuals in the second group, however, find themselves in more of an emergency situation, which prevents them from seizing the opportunity to benefit from social support over a long period in order to obtain a qualification. They are more likely than the others to drop out of the scheme quickly if a job opportunity, however precarious, presents itself. This financial emergency is particularly apparent among young women in the process of leaving the parental home or moving in with a partner.

** In the sense that they have had virtually no experience of paid work for several years.

Three types of integrated social support situations

Three types of situations emerge from the survey, depending on these various factors. In the first, the support helps course participants remobilise and gives them a sense of security; in the second, its effects are more limited while in the third it is, on the contrary, demotivating and fails to give participants any sense of security.

A situation in which the support is experienced as reassuring is characterised by: regular in-depth meetings between the social support worker and participants, tailored to participants' needs; stable locations and support team; complementary profiles for employment advisers and social support workers; consistency of approach between the training centre's professional staff and those providing support externally. For example, while the employment advisers offer course participants guidance on how to put together their CVs and draft their accompanying letters, the social support workers focus, during bilateral interviews, on participants' skills, attributes and

the peripheral obstacles to training and employment. This collaboration between advisers and support workers continues with the professionals (social workers or specialist instructors) who provide participants with support outside the training organisations. Early school leavers and the long-term unemployed are the main recipients of this type of support, which enables them to mobilise or remobilise their resources, and to construct or reconstruct their career plans in order to picture themselves on a training course, in an occupation or in a job.

Example of a support situation that offered security and reassurance:

Léo, 16 years of age, has problems with his sight and has to wear very strong prescription lenses. He joined the scheme after he had failed to obtain an apprenticeship in carpentry. After several placements in various sectors, he opted for catering. His plan was accepted and he began a CAP in catering (a level 3 qualification) in an organisation providing training leading to qualifications. The support provided for him revealed that he had dyslexia, which was the cause of his learning difficulties. Moreover, the diagnosis of his eye problem enabled an application to be made for him to be officially registered as disabled.

The situation in which the support has only limited effects has certain similarities with the previous one in terms of the stability of the professional staff and the consistency of the various interventions. However, it has only limited effects because of the participants' early departure from the course. Regardless of the quality of the training, two categories of participants in particular are involved in these early departures. For some, the initial enthusiasm and mobilisation they experience on entry into the scheme give

Example of a support situation with limited effects:

Sophie, 18 years of age, cohabits with her partner in his parents' house; he is a manual worker in a food processing factory. She does not have a driving licence. She joined the scheme for the promised support in order to decide what she wanted to do. Various placements in painting and decorating confirmed her in her choice of house painter as her future occupation and she decided to move in with her boyfriend. She began her training but quit after two weeks out of disappointment. She subsequently had a few spells of temporary work in order to follow through on her plan to move in with her boyfriend. Although she has withdrawn from the scheme, she does not reject it and is still in touch with her support worker.

way to feelings of demotivation resulting from a loss of meaning or thwarted plans. The group most affected by this comprises male early school leavers unable to motivate themselves to construct yet another career plan after repeated failures. For others, a sharp conflict arises between staying on this trajectory towards a training programme and leaving for a job that pays more money than the scheme can offer. This is more likely to happen in the case of young women who are changing their plans, deciding to cohabit with a partner and leaving the scheme for better paid work. Despite their departure, they all declare themselves satisfied with the support they received during their time in the scheme.

The support proves to be unsettling when the implementation of the scheme is characterised by inconsistencies and dysfunctions. The turnover among training centre staff and their deployment to different functions, as well as the irregular meetings, changes in schedules and the regular arrivals of new staff are demotivating and unsettling factors for all course participants, and particularly for those experiencing psychological social, economic

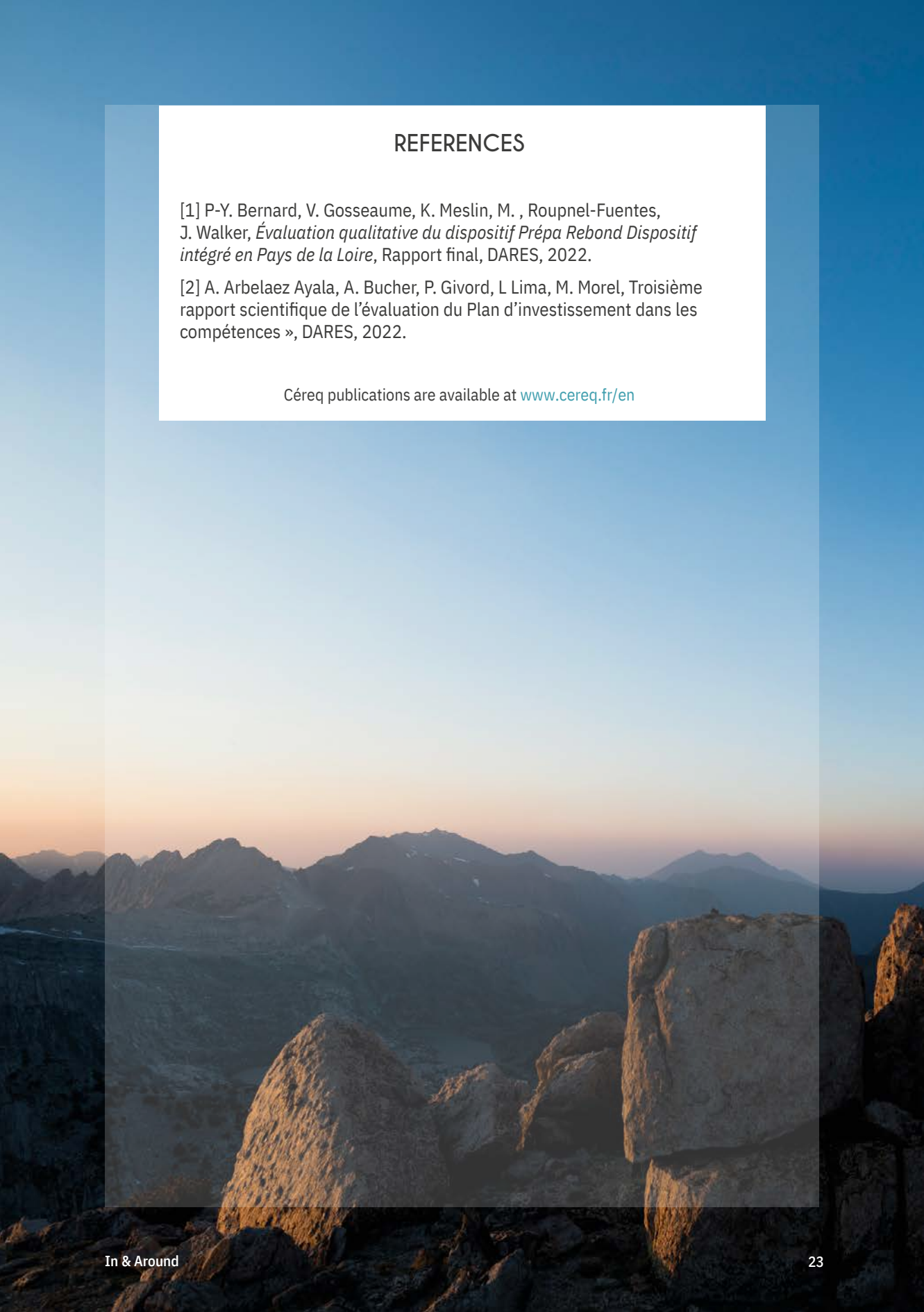
and work-related difficulties. The scheme then no longer makes any sense. In all cases, this type of support quickly leads participants to the exit door.

Example of an unsettling support situation:

Yvon, 29 years of age, living in accommodation sublet from a charitable organisation, has various family, health and psychological problems. Referred for entry to the scheme in March 2021 by the Unité Emploi, the agency responsible for supporting recipients of the minimum income allowance (RSA), he was initially enthusiastic but then a few health problems disrupted his attendance on placements in sales work. Demotivated, destabilised and unsettled by the constant arrival of new, younger participants in the scheme, as well as by the high level of turnover among the training staff, Yvon quit the scheme 4 months later without any training and without a job.

Conclusion

In the case of this trial scheme, the integrated social support clearly emerges as a key element and both staff and course participants are agreed that this function should be insourced. However, its success is not automatic. It functions at its best when the training organisations offer their employees stable employment conditions, favour complementarity of functions over the deployment of staff to a range of different roles, dedicate staff with specific skills to this function and coordinate the support measures in such a way as to ensure consistency with those implemented by other professionals both inside and outside the training organisations in order to offer scheme participants wide-ranging support.



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Are we moving towards "inclusive" support for adults with dissabilities in vocational training?

So-called "inclusive" policies aim to give priority to integrating disabled people into the mainstream environment rather than into specialised institutions. Just as in initial training, this trend is growing in vocational training for adults looking for a job. This Céreq Bref focuses on a disability compensation scheme called Formation Accompagnée or Supported Training, trialled in Normandy and currently being rolled out across the country. This assessment highlights the challenges involved in effectively taking into account the limited abilities of trainees, as well as the areas of expertise of the professional staff responsible for supporting them during their training.

Persons officially recognised as disabled, who are proportionately less well qualified and more likely to be unemployed than so-called "able-bodied" individuals [1], have received a considerable amount of attention from the public authorities in recent employment policies [2]. These persons are entitled to benefits under various disability compensation schemes, particularly when they are looking for work and want to access training. In this situation, two avenues are open to them. The majority of them sign up with a mainstream training organisation and claim various forms of assistance, such as specific support services (*prestations d'appui spécifique*/PAS)*, assistance with the adaptation of training situations (adaptation of training resources, awareness raising measures, etc.) or the disabled person's training resource (*ressource handicap formation*/RHF)**. Individuals judged to be more severely disabled may enrol in one of the 79 vocational rehabilitation establishments and services (*établissements et services de réadaptation professionnelle*/ESRP) in France, which offer 200 training courses leading to the award of qualifications [3]. In these specialist establishments, trainers and other professionals, such as nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists and so on, work alongside each other to develop pedagogical and medico-social expertise in making the needs of disabled persons an integral element of the training courses (cf. Box 1).

In recent years, a third, "innovative" avenue, known as supported training, has begun to emerge. Under this scheme, potential trainees are offered an opportunity to undertake their training in a mainstream organisation while benefiting from individualised medico-social support provided externally by ESRP personnel. This scheme extends to vocational training the injunction on the inclusion of recognised disabled individuals that already applies in initial education: the expectation is that they should be given a place as a matter of priority in a mainstream rather than a specialist setting. What does the Supported Training scheme promise? For trainees, it opens up access to training organisations close to their place of residence and to a considerably wider range of courses than those offered by the ESRPs. For trainers, it offers an opportunity to improve their skills in developing individualised courses for disabled trainees. This is why the scheme has been branded experimental and liable "*to profoundly change the training offer*" for so-called "*vulnerable*" groups, in a regional variant of the Skills Investment Plan (*Plan d'investissement dans les compétences*/PIC) in Normandy.

*Under the PAS, the consequences of a disability can be assessed by an expert in order to identify the forms of compensation and adaptation to be put in place.
** The RHF is a "one-off" offer of services aimed at training organisations and apprentice training centres covering three areas: upskilling, accessibility and compensation.

1 The vocational rehabilitation establishments and services (ESRPs): long-established organisations undergoing profound change

Vocational training for disabled persons was introduced in France after the Second World War by the 1957 act on the reclassification of disabled workers. The aim was to support this group of workers in returning to work after a period of physical or psychiatric rehabilitation. Some organisations were already involved in rehabilitation during the first half of the 20th century, including the National Office for Disabled Workers/*l'Office national des mutilés* (established in 1916) and the League for the Adaptation of the Physically Handicapped to Work/*la Ligue pour l'adaptation du diminué physique au travail* (established in 1929). These two organisations are the predecessors of the two current vocational rehabilitation establishments and services (ESRPs) in Normandy that are implementing the Supported Training scheme assessed in this edition of Céreq Bref. Pursuant to a recent decree (no. 2020-1216), the ESRPs have replaced the former vocational rehabilitation centres/centres de réadaptation professionnelle/CRPs, with the aim of diversifying their remits and working more closely with mainstream organisations on trial projects. These establishments originally dealt with physically disabled persons, but this situation is changing: today, individuals with a mental health condition, the chronically sick and persons with various social "vulnerabilities" make up the majority of their clients. Consequently, the ESRPs are currently engaged in the process of partly redefining their activities and target populations, as evidenced to some extent by the rollout of the Supported Training scheme.

As the scheme is about to be launched nationwide, Céreq is making available the main results of the qualitative assessment of its implementation in Normandy (cf. Box 2). What form does this third pathway to vocational training for disabled persons take? What added value do the ESRPs provide for this inclusion policy?

Medico-social support to make training programmes "safe" for disabled persons

The aim of the Supported Training scheme (*Formation Accompagnée*/DFA) is to facilitate access for registered disabled individuals to vocational training programmes delivered in mainstream settings and leading to qualifications. This increase in the opportunities available to such individuals is contingent on the provision of medico-social support during the training, overseen by training support coordinators based in the ESRPs. Entitlement to this new service provided externally by these specialist establishments depends on trainees being recognised as eligible by the Departmental Advice and Coordination Centre for Disabled Persons (*la Maison départementale des personnes handicapées*/MDPH) before admission to a training programme. The training support coordinators provide trainees with "*graduated*" support (frequent interviews, coaching, checking up by text and/or telephone calls), request medico-social interventions by the ESRPs' professional staff (psychological monitoring in order to "*overcome stress*", assessments by occupational therapists with a view to adapting work stations, assistance with applications for social benefits, etc.) and raise awareness among trainers of the adaptations that are desirable in order to compensate for disabilities. The form of support provided varies according to the needs identified on admission to the scheme and the difficulties encountered (relational problems, fatigue, pre-exam period, etc.).

The scheme is aimed at trainees with a range of different profiles and "*vulnerabilities*" of various kinds. As well as providing reassurance for disabled trainees and preventing dropouts, the scheme seeks to facilitate access to a wider training offer. When it was rolled out, the scheme potentially targeted two groups of individuals recognised as disabled. The first comprised those enrolled in a mainstream training programme but who were judged to be at risk of dropping out despite the various existing forms of disability compensation. The second comprised those who, in the absence of the DFA, would have been restricted to the training programmes offered in the ESRPs, which might be a long way from their place of residence. Thus the DFA was targeting a

heterogenous and interstitial population, one that was considered at one and the same time too "*vulnerable*" and "*precarious*" to be properly accommodated in mainstream settings and sufficiently "*independent*" not to fall within the scope of the specialist sector.

2 The qualitative evaluation of the Supported Training scheme (DFA)

On behalf of DARES and the scientific committee for the evaluation of the skills investment plan, Céreq carried out a qualitative study of the rollout of the DFA between July 2020 and July 2022. The final report, which can be consulted on line, was published in October 2023 [4]. The evaluation was based on a sociological analysis of the scheme that examined four aspects: the setting-up of the DFA and its integration into the pre-existing system of disability compensation (analysis carried out in partnership with the Amnyos consultancy); the activities connected with the coordination of training pathways within the ESRPs; the reception of the trainees by the mainstream training organisations; the effects of the scheme on users' training pathways.

The study protocol was based on 116 in-depth interviews. In order better to capture the ongoing changes in practices, a longitudinal approach was adopted, based on repeated interviews (2 to 3 waves for 21 interviewees. Varied sequences of observations were also carried out (work meetings, DFA presentations, training sessions, etc.). Finally, the managers of the two ESRPs were invited to take part in a questionnaire-based survey (63 responses).

Uneven rollout and narrower range of training programmes than expected

When it was launched in January 2019, the DFA constituted an extension of a programme that had initially been confined to the city of Caen but was now being rolled out across the whole of the Normandy region (cf. Box 3). In order to become an integral part of the existing offer of disability compensation schemes, the DFA had to convince both the referrers (i.e. the actors in the public employment service) and the regulators (the five MDPHs responsible for accepting or rejecting applications for admission to a training programme via the DFA). The "*ambitious*" target of 230 supported course participants by 2023 was announced.

One of the assessment's first findings is that the DFA has not achieved its initial quantitative targets: 77 trainees were supported between January 2019 and July 2022 (average age 38 and 62% women). Nevertheless, the ESRPs draw attention, firstly, to the constant increase in the volume of tracking and monitoring being carried out and, secondly, to the considerable impact of the active queue, which consists of those individuals who are ultimately not referred to the DFA but who account for a significant share of the organisations' activites that had initially been underestimated. While the Covid-19 pandemic was a factor in the scheme's complicated start-up, there is no reason to suppose that it would have been able to get any closer to achieving its quantitative targets during its early years, particularly because of the tensions with partner organisations that have been identified.

The levels and courses of training taken have not been as varied as expected; the trainees have mainly opted for the qualifications that can be obtained by completing short courses of just a few months (80%) rather than aiming for the higher-level qualifications awarded after completion of longer courses (CAP, BTS, state-registered diploma etc.). More than half of the trainees took service industry training courses leading to two state-validated vocational qualifications, namely assistant secretary and accounting and administrative assistant. A few trainees in the cleaning and health and social sectors should be noted. Sixty-three per cent of the DFA trainees undertook courses provided by one of two organisations offering vocational training for adults, the so-called GRETAs and AFPAs (see footnotes)[1]. The courses were concentrated around the cities of Caen and Rouen, as is the main provision of vocational training leading to the award of qualifications. Since September 2022, the DFA has been open to apprenticeships.

[1]Translator's note : GRETA stands for *Groupement d'établissements*, i.e. groups of local adult education centres that pool their skills and resources to offer continuing vocational training for adults. AFPA is the *Agence nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes*/National Agency for Adult Vocational Training.

Training course coordinators take the lead in providing support

Above and beyond this quantitative data, the individuals who have been assisted highlight the usefulness of the support provided. They all describe, firstly, a fast-paced training environment in which the expectations are extremely demanding, all of which is further compounded by regular experience of discrimination linked to their disabilities. Faced with this exacting environment, they all express their satisfaction with the medico-social support they received; clearly, the interventions by the ESRP professionals prevented some trainees from dropping out. Above all, the users emphasise the importance of the relationships forged with the training course coordinators. In a situation experienced as destabilising, these relationships proved to be a means of combating isolation and a space in which users could express themselves in order to externalise and give vent to the difficulties they were experiencing within the training organisations. The work of these coordinators is extremely varied, in terms of both the range of tasks carried out and the adaptation of those tasks to the needs of each trainee in receipt of support. The level of their involvement in this relational work varies depending on the trainees' profiles and ranges from a level of protection very close to constant monitoring to occasional contacts.

On the other hand, it has proved more difficult to mobilise the medico-social professionals. During the first few years of the scheme, their interventions were regularly restricted to the diagnostic phase only (notably in order to provide evidence for the applications submitted to the MDPH), often because of a lack of availability. Working outside the confines of the ESRPs has not been easy and similar difficulties have been experienced when the trainees were already receiving support (from psychological services, for example). In areas far away from the premises of the two ESRPs, agreements have gradually been established with the external providers. The training course coordinators have generally covered for these gaps in availability and have become more like guides or chaperones rather than the role originally planned for them, which was to "*pull strings and respond to needs*".

Presence across the region seems on the road to normalisation

The DFA has encountered several obstacles that have slowed down its expansion across the region, notably unforeseen differences in levels of admission to the scheme in the various parts of the region. During the scheme's early years, the ESRPs experienced great difficulties in getting their partners *Cap emploi* (which at the time was in the process of merging with *Pôle emploi*)[2] and the MDPHs involved. We have observed some significant differences in the ways these two actors identified the target population and the needs to which the DFA might respond. These partners feared seeing their own expertise contested. The upshot was that course guidance and notifications of entitlement were unevenly distributed depending on the disabled jobseekers' places of residence. This dynamic has highlighted the tensions in a training offer orchestrated and promoted at regional level but dependent on disability compensation measures that are regulated differently in each *département* within the region.

Coordinating the application examination stage with the start of the training programmes also proved complex. Half of the trainees had started their training without having received their notification of entitlement to the DFA. Consequently, several of these individuals were not supported during the positioning tests or even began their courses without any support. As a result, there were regular interventions during the training programmes on behalf of trainees encountering difficulties, with the scheme becoming corrective rather than preventive as initially intended.

[2] Translator's note: *Cap emploi*: employment service for the disabled; *Pôle emploi* – French national employment service, now rebranded as *France Travail*.

3 A long-standing scheme, but "innovative" by virtue of its dimensioning

This scheme already has a certain history. Fifteen years ago, one of the two ESRPs in the region had its offices in an AFPA building in Caen. The presence of the specialist and mainstream sectors in the same building facilitated cooperation between the two organisations and the ESRP began to provide support for AFPA trainees and trainers. At that time, the scheme was known as "Common Pathways". In 2016, these support services were offered to all training organisations in Lower Normandy, as part of an experimental project involving some ten trainees initiated by the Regional Council. When the regions merged, efforts were made to extend the experiment and the Supported Training scheme was set up in 2018. It was jointly led by two new actors: the Regional Health Agency which, as the funding body for the ESRPs, wanted to see them make this "shift towards greater inclusivity", and the other ESRP in the region. A partnership has developed between the two establishments, which until now had not worked together very much. In the absence of any extra funding, they have been asked to partly restructure, one of the main objectives being to set up mobile teams of training course coordinators dedicated to the DFA. At the end of the evaluation, this function was being carried out solely by women. The first ESRP has two training course coordinators (having opted to retrain existing employees), while the second one has four (most of them recruited externally). Nevertheless, the task of tracking the trainees, carried out by a two-person coordination team, is evenly distributed between the two ESRPs.

During the early years of the DFA rollout, the professionals (scheme coordinators and training course coordinators) intensified communications with the partner organisations with a view to finding areas of common ground. They familiarised themselves with each MDPH's eligibility criteria (which differed from the traditional course guidance offered by ESRPs). Regular adjustments were made in order to eliminate certain disagreements. This policy continues to evolve through a process of co-construction which, incidentally, according to the actors, puts the relatively small number of individuals who have received support since the launch of the DFA into some kind of perspective.

Individualisation of learning incomplete despite more frequent requests

The mainstream training organisations were initially ambivalent in their perceptions of the DFA, particularly since they laid claim to considerable prior experience in managing disabled trainees. This applied particularly to those providing service industry training courses, notably in secretarial and other office functions. At the same time, the Normandy regional council had put in place policies aimed at raising awareness of disabilities and changing practices. Furthermore, the Qualiopi reference framework (further to the Act on the Freedom to Choose One's Future Occupation of 5 September 2018) helped to put this issue on their agendas, notably by making it compulsory to apppoint a disability adviser.

From a learning point of view, however, the adjustments proposed under the DFA often remain limited to tried and tested measures, such as open distance learning (ODL)***, that involve less travelling for trainees and offer them greater freedom to arrange their medical appointments. ODL seems to be the least expensive method in terms of human resources and material constraints. Taking advantage of the commitment displayed by certain professionals, some smaller training organisations have introduced a number of noteworthy examples of disability compensation, including specific adjustments to timetables and individualised tracking of learning progress, but such measures have proved rare. Ultimately, "supported" training "has not always been training fully" adapted "to the needs of disabled trainees, despite the training course coordinators attempts at remediation".

*** It should be noted that the regional authorities have imposed quotas for the use of ODL, at a rate of 10% across all training courses and 20% for service sector and digital programmes.

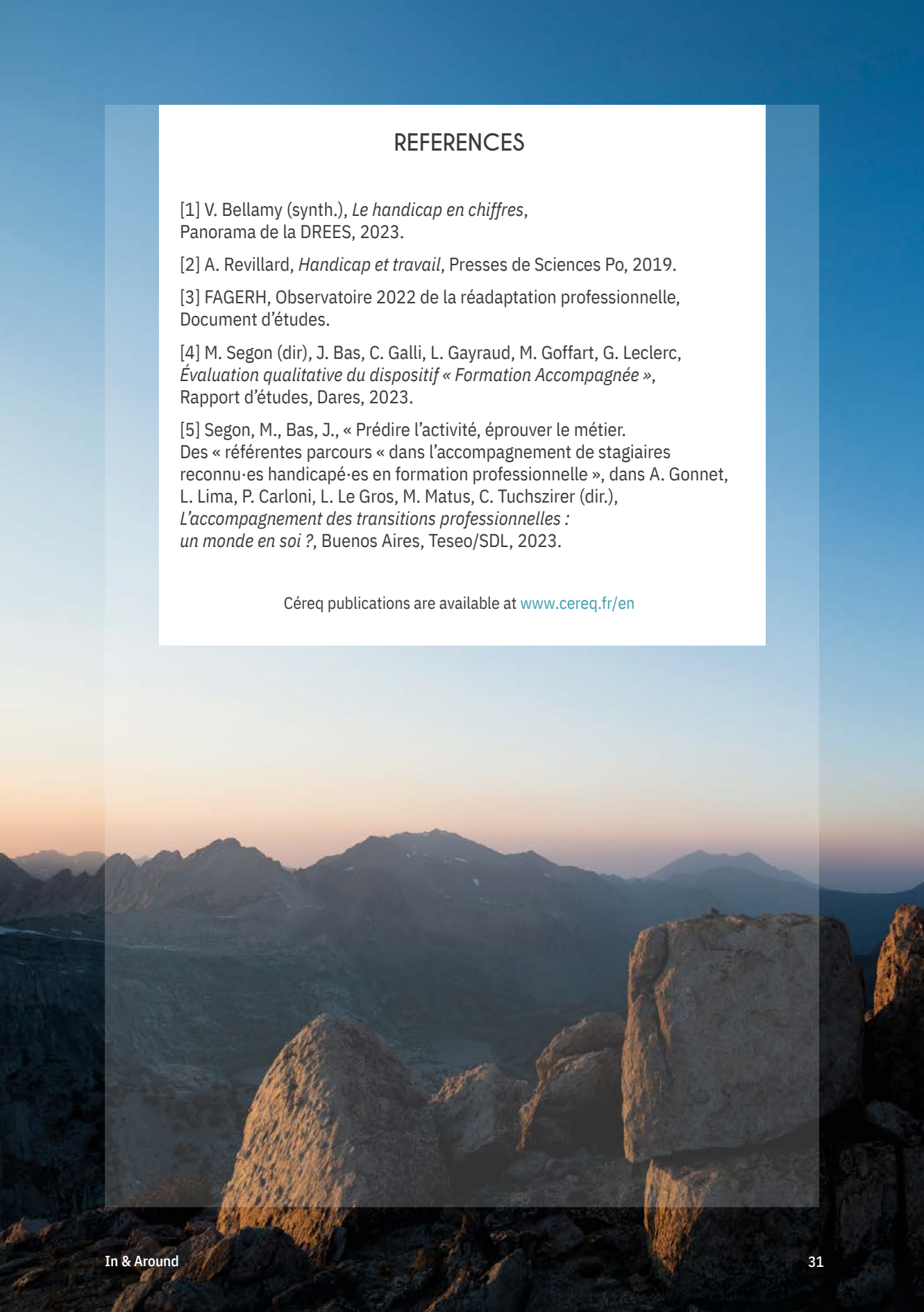
One question that arises is how to bring into focus the medico-social support provided by the ESRP professionals. Due to the fact that most of the contacts between the training advisers and trainees take place outside the training schedules [5], this "extramural" support provided by the ESRPs cannot be observed within the training organisations' premises. This invisibility brings with it the risk that the training organisations will fail fully to recognise either trainees' needs or the degree of support provided by the ESRPs. Consequently, the improvement in the training organisations' expertise in individualising their provision for disabled persons, which was one of the aims of the DFA, has been only partially achieved. While the scheme seemed initially to experience some difficulty in finding its place in the field of vocational training, it has over the years been called on increasingly by certain organisations, particularly when some of their trainees seemed on the point of abandoning their courses.

Conclusion

The number of users of the Supported Training scheme in Normandy is gradually increasing, while those leading it continue to develop its operations (introduction of possible in-class support, opening the scheme up to other target populations and so on). Step by step, case by case, professionals in the ESRPs are attempting to reconcile the positions, know-how and time frames of the various partners involved in the construction of the training pathways for disabled persons. Whether it be the differences between the départements or those between the two ESRPs in the region, the boundaries of the DFA and its target populations do not seem to be quite the same. This reinforces the "positive" discourse on the schemes' polymorphous nature but may at the same time cloud perceptions of it among its referring partners.

In responding to Céreq's questionnaire, one French ESRP in three stated in 2022 that it was already proposing to offer external support for trainees in mainstream organisations. One in two stated they were already planning or actually putting place such a scheme. Now that this third pathway into vocational training is established, how can the specialist sector make the case for the specific contributions it makes in mainstream settings? In view of the successes and pitfalls encountered by their Norman precursors, the ESRPs could be more assertive in calling attention to their two long-established areas of expertise, namely learning engineering and medico-social intervention. These particular areas of expertise would enable them to work with the mainstream organisations to develop individualised training programmes for disabled persons and to support them in their learning.

In order for this to happen, bridges still have to be built between the actors in two worlds little known to each other, even though in the scheme's early days they shared the same premises at the Caen AFPA. In what ways could the training course coordinators in the specialist sector and the disability advisers in the training organisations, the potential mediators between the specialist and mainstream sectors, help to bring about this rapprochement?



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Do young community service volunteers follow the same paths as other young people?

Since it was set up in 2010, the voluntary community service scheme has become more diversified, with regard to both its objectives and the uses made of it. Analysis of its role in young people's education-to-work transition reveals the importance of the stage in individual trajectories at which young people volunteer, of their level of qualification and of the type of education and training they have undergone. Carried out on the initiative of the Agency for Community Service and drawing on the *Génération 2017* survey, a study by Céreq adds to our knowledge of the young volunteers and provides the basis for comparing their education-to-employment trajectories with those of the other young people in their cohort.

In the last ten years or so, the community service scheme (cf. Box 1) has acquired a particular place in both public youth policies and in the ways young people manage their lives. The scheme is a composite one, made up of various constituent elements; it is based primarily on the principle of commitment and is more or less directly linked to certain youth employment policies of general interest (TUC*, EIL**) that prioritise the goals of citizenship and social cohesion. The community service scheme is also linked to remediation policies on early school leaving. For their part, the young volunteers get involved in order to build their career plans or take advantage of this experience in order to enter the labour market.

In this respect, therefore, the community service scheme may constitute a resource for certain groups facing difficulties in effecting the transition from school to work, due notably to their educational trajectory or place of residence. Consequently, it may function rather like a labour market integration programme or other support measure, as the following results will substantiate.

The number of young volunteers has increased continually since the scheme was launched in 2010, rising from 2,900 in 2010 to 55,000 in 2016 and then to 145,000 in 2021. Of the young people who left initial education in 2017, almost one in ten (9%) completed a community service assignment while in education or during the first three years of their working lives. This is the initial result from a study carried out at the request of the Agency for Community Service that aimed to expand our knowledge of the young volunteer population, of their education-to-employment trajectories and of any specific characteristics they might have; the study drew on Céreq's *Génération 2017* survey, which is representative of those leaving education at national level (cf. Box 2). Certain questions in the survey funded by the Agency enable us to situate the assignment precisely within the young volunteers' educational or career trajectories and thus to assess the role that community service plays in their education-to-employment trajectories. This augments the follow-up data generally collected six months after the end of an assignment and facilitates comparison with the young people whose trajectories do not include a community service assignment.

*TUC • Travaux d'utilité collective/Community work.
**EIL• Emploi d'intérêt local/Local community service.

Differing positions and uses in individual trajectories

Cross-referencing levels of education with the timing of community service assignments shows that the position of the assignments in individual trajectories varies, which leads

1 Community service

The community service scheme gives all young people aged between 16 and 25, or as old as 30 for those with a handicap, an opportunity to complete a 6 to 12-month assignment in the fields that have been designated national priorities: social cohesion, health, education for all, culture and leisure, sport, environment, memory and citizenship, international development and humanitarian action, humanitarian emergency intervention and European citizenship. Without special dispensation, a young person may not carry out more than a single complete assignment, during or after their education.

A very diverse range of organisations can offer assignments: government departments, regional authorities, public undertakings or any non-profit body, i.e. voluntary associations (except political or religious associations), foundations, federation, NGOs or cooperatives. The Community Service Agency authorises the organisations and certifies that they operate in the general interest.

The weekly working time for an assignment is between 24 and 35 hours. Since 1 July 2022, the community service allowance has been set at 600.94 euros for assignments carried out in France. The contract specifies the content of the assignment. Young volunteers are supported by a tutor who, when the assignment has been completed, certifies the skills deployed and acquired in an assessment report (*bilan nominatif*). These skills can be added to the Diagoriente platform (a public service maintained by the Ministry of Labour in order to facilitate vocational guidance).

us to suspect that the various categories of young people use the scheme in different ways (cf. Figure 3). While 22% of the young people carried out their assignments during their initial education, one third started theirs during the six months after they had left education and 45% did theirs at a later stage. The higher the level of qualification, the earlier the community service assignment appears in their life trajectories (in particular, in the case of graduates, during their time in higher education).

The situation preceding the start of the community service also varied depending on the level of education: the more highly qualified were more likely to volunteer after a period of employment or study (26% and 35% of those with a qualification requiring 5 or more years' post-secondary education volunteered for community service, compared with 11% and 20% of those educated only to CAP level or lower). For the least qualified, conversely, community service tended to follow a period of unemployment or another situation, such as inactivity, holiday etc. These results are consistent with the motivations cited by the young people [1]: for the least well qualified, who often find it more difficult to access employment, the primary aim was to acquire work experience and a source of income, while the public interest was frequently mentioned by the more highly qualified [2].

Community service: one way of overcoming a disrupted education

The *Génération* survey can be used to reveal the particular connections between completion of a community service assignment and educational trajectories. The young volunteers turn out to be less well qualified than the 2017 cohort as a whole. They are more likely to have left education without qualifications, and only 34% of them have higher education qualifications (cf. Table 4).

Those young people whose education had had little or no vocational content had a greater propensity to carry out a community service assignment. This applies particularly to holders of the general *baccalauréat* and graduates of general degree programmes. On the other hand, vocational programmes, regardless of their level, do not predispose those who take them to volunteer for community service, and the more the level of education or training rises, the less likely young people are to volunteer. While there were more young volunteers with backgrounds in specialisms connected to the areas covered by the community

service scheme, the decision to undertake an assignment was determined more by whether or not the volunteers had followed a vocational pathway.

Moreover, analysis of the educational careers shows that a "disrupted education" (repeating a year, qualification not awarded at the end of education), and in particular the fact of having been forced to leave education altogether, meant a young person was more likely to volunteer. In such cases, the role of community service is to remediate or prolong an unfinished educational career.

Leavers from secondary and higher education who had undertaken community service were more likely than others with the same profiles to return to their education or training three years after the end of their initial education (cf. Table 5). This highlights the impact that the scheme can have on young people's efforts to construct their career plans, whether it helps them to develop an idea further, to discover a new occupation or to find a vocational pathway that sometimes requires a change of educational direction.

Volunteers' profiles influenced by the nature of the assignments on offer

In the 2017 cohort, more young women than young men volunteered for community service (10% and 7% respectively); this is true regardless of level of education or qualification. This gendered response to the scheme can be understood by reference to its nature, to the fields of activity it covers and the assignments on offer (education, social, culture). Young women have a strong presence in education and training programmes preparing them to "work for others" and are more likely to commit to a scheme that highlights this aspect.

Participation in community service was not socially differentiated to any great extent in the 2017 cohort. Young people from the most modest backgrounds (defined as those having two parents who are manual workers, office/service workers or unemployed) were slightly more likely to undertake community service and to do so after leaving the education system, which can be linked to their level of qualification. Recipients of education support grants were also slightly more likely to volunteer than non-recipients, whether the community service was undertaken before or after they completed their education (10% of grant recipients volunteered for community service, compared with 8% of non-recipients).

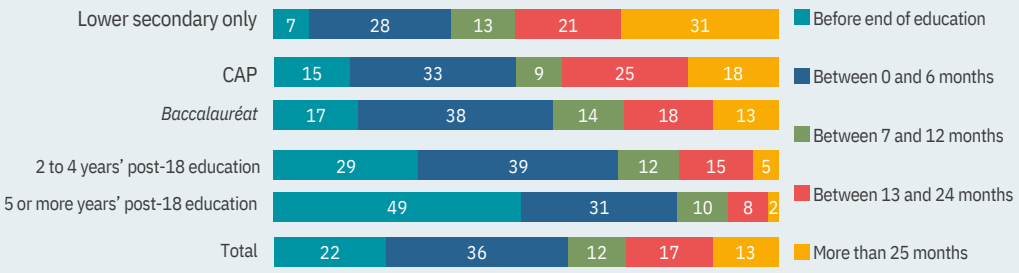
Young people who were living in urban policy priority neighbourhoods when they completed their education were more likely to volunteer for community service those not living in such areas (12% and 8% respectively) and were more likely to do so after finishing their education. This finding has to be qualified, however, since the distribution of the young volunteers is not entirely homogeneous over the country as a whole and some of the disparities observed can be explained

2 The data used

The results set out here are drawn from an analysis of the *Génération 2017* survey. Between the autumn of 2020 and March 2021, as part of its *Génération* survey programme, Céreq questioned 25,000 young people who had left the education system during or at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year. This sample is representative of the 746,000 young people nationwide who left initial education for the first time. The young people were questioned about their educational trajectories and the first three years of their working lives. In this way, the survey aimed to investigate the differences in the conditions under which the young people accessed employment depending on their initial education and various individual characteristics.

The complete study can be consulted on line at https://www.cereq.fr/service-civique-et-insertion-generation-2017. Of the 2,000 young people surveyed who stated that they had volunteered for community service, the 220 individuals whose assignments had finished less than six months before the survey reference date (October 2020) were not included in the study of the impact on the education-to-work transition. As a result, all the community service assignments that were undertaken in part during the health crisis were eliminated from the study.

3 The stage in educational and career trajectories when community service was undertaken by level of qualification (in %)



Source: Céreq, *Génération* 2017 survey.
Scope: young people who volunteered for community service.
Example: 36% of the young people who volunteered for community service began their assignments between 0 and 6 months after the end of their initial education.

Génération

by local contexts in which young people experience greater difficulties in entering the labour market (young volunteers in the overseas *départements* are overrepresented in the volunteer population, for example).

Finally, among those leaving secondary education, the fact of having at least one parent in state employment (*fonctionnaire*) increased the likelihood of volunteering for community service; this was not the case, however, for higher education graduates.

A favoured route into employment for young people leaving secondary education

Even though community service is not regarded legally as a job, for many it constitutes a stage in their education-to-work transition. Thus for 68% of the young people who volunteered during the first three years of their working lives it served as their first "work" experience and for 18% it even represented the only period that could be likened to employment. This result is further reinforced for the least well qualified (CAP level or lower); 30% of those in this group who volunteered for community service after leaving education did not have any job at all in their first three years.

The results presented above have highlighted the specific characteristics of the young volunteers' profiles. Now Céreq's studies show that some of these characteristics influence career trajectories and might therefore help to explain, to a greater extent than experience of community service, the differences observed in labour market integration. In order to bring to light the specific effect of volunteering for community service while taking account of these other characteristics influencing labour market integration, ceteris paribus modelling exercises (binary logistic regression models for wages) were undertaken, highlighting the differential effect of community service on labour market integration depending on the young persons' profiles and the timing of their community service (see Table 5).

Unlike existing studies on the subject, the data used here make it possible to compare the labour market integration of volunteers leaving initial education with that of their counterparts with no involvement in the scheme. Thus, all characteristics being equal, community service, whether carried out before or after completion of education, facilitates access to employment three years after the end of their education for the young people leaving secondary education, which is not the case for those leaving higher education. For this latter group, the large number of those returning to education after their voluntary service may partly explain why they were less likely to be in employment.

4 Information on gender and level of qualification (in %)

		Community service before end of education	Community service after end of education	All young people who volunteered	Cohort as a whole
Share of women		54	60	58	51
Level of qualification (% in column)	Lower secondary only	5	18	15	12
	CAP	6	10	9	10
	Baccalauréat	32	44	42	31
	2 to 4 years' post-18 education	27	19	21	24
	5 or more years' post-18 education	30	9	13	23

Source: Céreq, *Génération* 2017 survey.
Scope: young people who volunteered for community service.
Example: 5% of the young people who volunteered for community service before the end of their initial education left secondary education with lower secondary qualifications only.

Génération

Those young people who volunteered for community service at a later stage were less likely to be in employment in October 2020, which may be explained by the overly short period of time between the end of their assignments and the survey. This situation is linked to the fact that the host organisations do not generally retain the young volunteers once their assignments have been completed: only 10% of the former volunteers were in this situation [3].

In order to understand the differentiated impact of community service by level of qualification, we can seek to identify the most likely situation these young people would have been in during the same period if they had not decided to volunteer for community service. This process of identification is based on a method in which each young volunteer is matched with a non-volunteering "twin" who resembles him or her very strongly. In order to match the two, the survey information on both individuals' initial education, individual characteristics and career trajectories preceding the beginning of community service is compared (cf. report cited in Box 2).

Thus among the leavers from secondary education, while our population of interest was doing their community service, their "twins" were more likely to be unemployed than in work. Conversely, among the higher education graduates, the volunteers' "twins" were more likely to be in work than unemployed. For this latter group, therefore, it would appear that community service was not equivalent to a "normal" job in their career trajectories.

Employment conditions linked to specific occupations

Three years after completing their education, the employment conditions (pay and access to a permanent job, i.e. an open-ended contract, governmental employment or non-wage job) of the young people who volunteered for community service while in education were close to those of their counterparts who had not volunteered and who were also in employment at that time (the only exception being the slightly lower pay for higher education graduates who had volunteered). This close comparability between these two populations can be explained by the equivalent number of months spent in work. This is not the case, on the other hand, for those young people who completed their community service after leaving education; for this group, the community service constituted an interlude, as it were, in their

5 Results of the modelling exercises (effect direction) on the indicators after three years of working life (October 2020)

	Probability of being in education or of return to education[1]		Probability of being in work[1]		Probability of being in a permanent job[2]		Pay[3]	
(Reference : no community service)	Secondary	Higher	Secondary	Higher	Secondary	Higher	Secondary	Higher
CS before end of education	=	+	+	=	=	=	-	=
CS between 0 and 12 months	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
CS after 13 or more months	+	+	-	-	-	Insufficient numbers	-	Insufficient numbers

Scope: 1 Cohort as a whole. 2 Of the young people in work in October 2020. 3 All the young people in waged work in October 2020.
Example: of the young people with secondary-level qualifications (lower and upper secondary) and with the same characteristics controlled for in the model (cf. report Box 2), the fact of having volunteered for community service increased the probability of being in employment in October 2020.

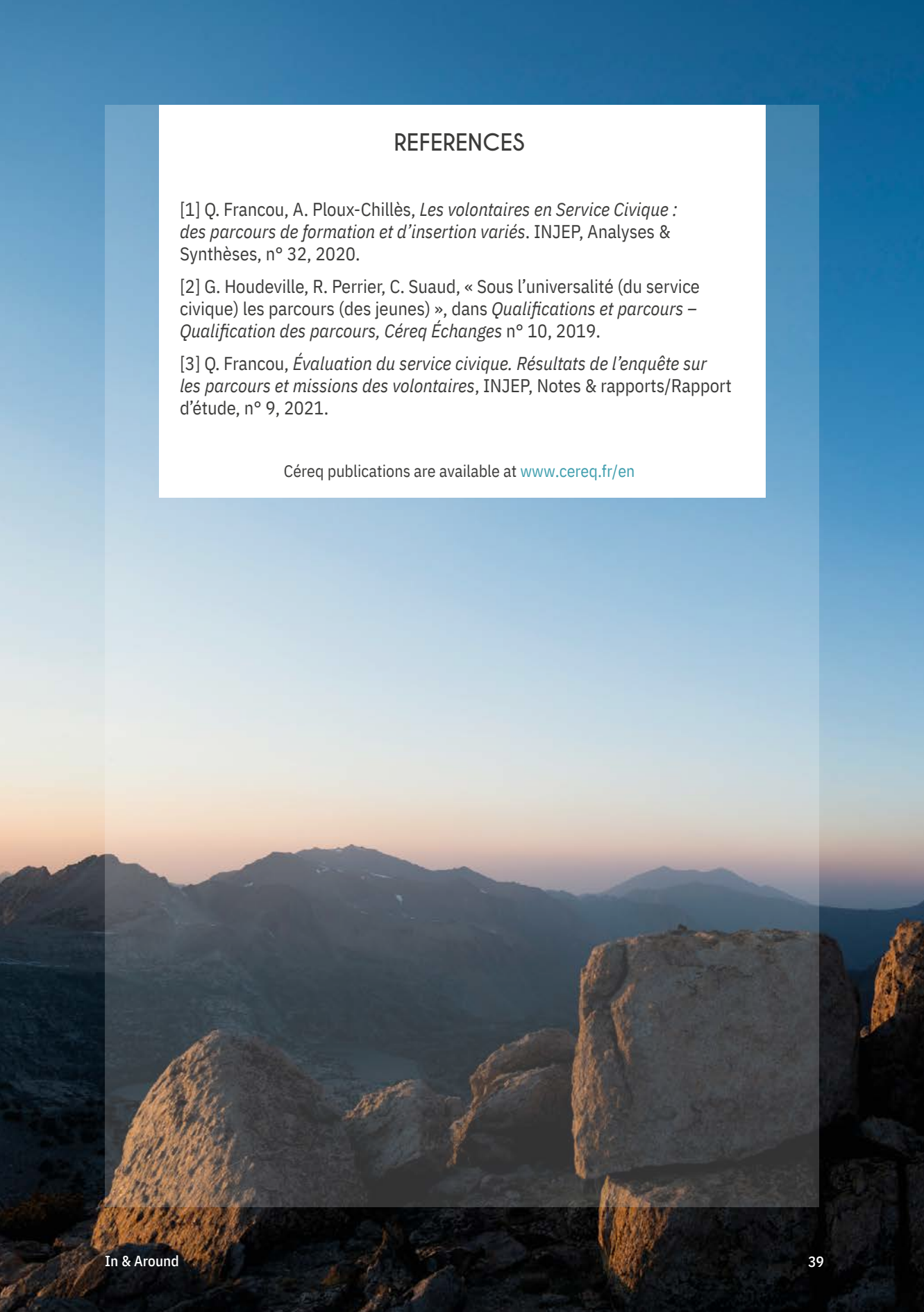
education-to-work transition, unconnected with either a job or their search for a job. Thus those leaving secondary and higher education who had volunteered after the end of their education enjoyed less favourable employment conditions, in terms of stability of employment and of remuneration, than those who had not volunteered. There is a parallel to be drawn here with the specific nature of the jobs held by the young people who had volunteered: more jobs in the public sector, in voluntary associations and in areas involving "work for others", such as teaching, the cultural sector and health and social work. Thus for the more highly qualified in particular, community service may seem like a strategy adopted with a view to obtaining jobs in organisations, sectors or occupations in which jobs are more scarce or employment conditions less favourable but which fulfil individual aspirations other than the search for a stable, well-paid job (serving the public interest, having a job that has meaning, finding one's chosen career path, etc.).

Conclusion

The specificity of this young volunteer population is to have acquired characteristics generally associated with a difficult education-to-work transition (qualifications with little vocational content, disrupted education, living in an overseas *département* and so on). Nevertheless, when these characteristics are taken into account, some positive effects of the community service scheme become apparent, notably in terms of access to employment in the case of those with secondary education qualifications and a return to education after community service in the case of the volunteer population as a whole. On the other hand, participation in the scheme does not seem to have had a positive influence on employment conditions after three years of the young people's working lives. Might this result be explained in part by specific career plans, oriented towards occupations and sectors in which employment conditions are often less favourable?

This study could be extended and supplemented by data on the actual content of the voluntary service and its link with young volunteer's subsequent career trajectory, the type of host organisation, the skills acquired and any benefits declared by the young volunteers.

The inclusion of community service in the 2020 recovery plan "*1 jeune, 1 solution*/1 young person, 1 solution', supported by the Ministry of Labour, was a response to political concerns about young people's integration into the labour market in the context of a health crisis. The changes this measure might bring about in volunteers' profiles and in the scheme's impact on labour market trajectories will be assessed when the results of this study are updated with data from the next *Génération 2021* survey.



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Shortage occupations: might young people be the answer?

Tensions in the labour market reflect recruitment difficulties that are often seen as the result of a gap, in terms of quantity and quality, between applicants' skills and employers' expectations. But does such a gap exist for young people at the start of their working lives? Do they need to be trained in shortage occupations in order to be recruited? And how can they find long-term employment? Based on data from the *Génération* survey, this Céreq Bref looks at the situation of three job families characterised by labour shortages in the early years of the working lives of young people who left vocational training in 2017.

A recurrent target of public policies, the occupations regarded as shortage occupations are those in which the number of job offers circulating in the labour market exceeds the demand for jobs from those seeking employment. Thus the existence of shortage occupations is an indication of a dysfunctional labour market that public policies seek to remedy. In order to do that, the cause of the labour market tightness must be identified. The gap between supply and demand is often attributed to a lack of applicants, but it may be also be more qualitative in nature if the applicants' profiles do not match employers' expectations in terms of training and/or experience. Other factors can be identified, such as difficult working conditions that make a particular occupation unattractive, a local mismatch preventing supply from meeting demand or even the amount of recruitment being undertaken (cf. Box 1).

This edition of *Céreq Bref* is concerned with the role that young people might play in resolving these tensions. Are young people at the beginning of their working lives potential candidates for these shortage occupations? If they turn to them at this stage of their working lives, will they stay in them? And what role does their initial training play? Do they need it to match the occupation in question in order to be hired? And when they do have the appropriate training, do they commit themselves to a long-term future in the occupation?

The proposed analysis focuses on three job families: those in construction and public works, in the hotel, catering and food industry and in IT. Firstly, they are regarded by DARES, the French Ministry of Employment's department of research, studies and statistics, as severe or even very severe shortage occupations; secondly, the causes of the shortages are numerous and vary considerably: lack of applicants, problems with training, working conditions, etc. [2]. These job families have also been selected because of the positions they occupy in the trajectories of labour market entrants. Carried out in 2020 among young people who had completed their training in 2017 (*Génération 2017*), the Céreq survey of the 2017 cohort can be used to observe their labour market trajectories, and in particular the succession of jobs held during the first three years of their working lives (cf. Box 2).

Construction and public works, hotels, catering and food and IT: shortage occupations in young people's trajectories

Construction and public works occupations feature in young people's trajectories, whether they be skilled or unskilled blue-collar occupations in structural and public works or in finishing works, plant operators

1 The shortage occupations

Since 2020, DARES and Pôle emploi, the French employment service, have produced a synthetic indicator of shortage occupations that can be used to measure the shortages in each occupation [1]. It comprises three components covering the relationship between the flow of job offers and the share of recruitment campaigns that employers anticipate being difficult.

In addition to this synthetic indicator, complementary indicators are calculated in order to measure the various factors causing the shortages: the amount of recruitment being undertaken (the more employers recruit, the harder they have to look for applicants and repeat the process, which may potentially increase the shortages); constraining working conditions that may make recruitment more difficult; the lack of available labour (recruiting in a large pool of job seekers looking for a job in a particular occupation is easier – all other things being equal of course – than recruiting in a context in which labour is scarce); the link between training specialism and occupation (a gap between the skills required by employers and those possessed by the individuals in search of employment can aggravate the shortages); geographical mismatch (the supply of available labour and the vacancies to be filled are not necessarily located in the same place).

https://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/publication/les-tensions-sur-le-marche-du-travail-en-2022

The shortages are identified at the level of the job families and not at that of the companies and industries to which they are affiliated. In the text, therefore, the terms construction and public works, hotels, catering and food and IT refer consistently to the job family in question and not to the sector.

jobs, supervisory occupations or technical managers and engineers occupations. Among the young people who had completed their education/training in 2017 and who had worked during the following three years, 6.5% or approximately 43,000 individuals had worked in a construction and public works occupation. A gradual rise can be observed over the first three years of their working lives, since these occupations accounted for 4.9% of the first jobs held by the young people and 5.4% of those held after three years, which equates to a gradual increase in the share of these occupations in the employment of the labour market entrants that comes close to their share of 6.6% in the total employed population. For some young people, therefore, they may be the occupations in which they put down roots.

Over the three years of the observation period, a far greater number of the young people worked in occupations in the hotel, catering and food sector, which include occupations in the food trade (butcher, baker and so on), work in kitchens and occupations in the hotel and catering industries (office staff and supervisors, managers of hotels, cafes, restaurants). This is the case for 13.7% of the young people who finished their training in 2017, some 90,000 individuals in all. However, whereas the majority of the young people who entered occupations in construction and public works actually put down roots in them, the many young people who entered occupations in hotel, catering and food tended to use them as points of entry into the labour market and did not intend to stay in them for the long term. Thus the share of hotel, catering and food occupations in all the jobs held by the young people for the first three years of their working lives drops considerably between the first and last job observed, falling from 10.45 to 8.8%. While it is still higher than for the employed population as a whole (4.5%), the continuing decline observed from mid-2019 onwards suggests that, beyond the three years covered by the survey, more people are likely to leave these occupations than enter them and that their share is therefore likely to continue to decline.

More than 27,000 of the young people who left initial training in 2017, or 4% of those who worked during the first three years of their working lives, took jobs in IT technician and engineer occupations. Such occupations seem to be readily accessible for young people [4]. Indeed, it can be observed both

that the share of these occupations among the jobs held by the labour market entrants rises continuously over the three years – from 3.2% for first jobs to 3.5% for last jobs – and that these occupations account for a significantly greater share of the young people's employment than that of the employed population as a whole (2.2 %).

Staying in the construction and public works occupations: the decisive role of initial experiences

For three quarters of the young people who had held a job in the construction and public works sector during the first three years of their working lives, that job was their first job. And almost 8 out of 10 had spent more than half of their time in employment in a job in this group of occupations; this phenomenon was even more marked in the case of managers. Thus the young people who launched their working lives in this sector were able to remain in it on a long-term basis, but who are they? They are both young people who have undergone training in these occupations (44%) as well as young people who have completed courses in other specialisms (56%) (cf. Box 3). Thus not all the young people working in construction and public works have been trained in the corresponding specialisms; similarly, not all the young people trained in construction and public works occupations worked in that sector, with 43% of them turning their backs on it.

Above and beyond the training specialism, other factors conspire to stretch the relationship between training and employment for construction and public works occupations. For example, they are still regarded socially as being men's jobs, which is why their attractiveness differs by gender. Another factor is that these occupations tend to favour young people who are already acculturated to work, and in this respect young people who have completed an apprenticeship are overrepresented, even if their training is not specific to construction and public works occupations [5].

2 Sources and methodology

Our analysis is based on data from the *Génération 2017* – 3 years on survey conducted by Céreq.

As far as training is concerned, the analysis focuses on the specialism of the highest qualification obtained and on that of the qualification studied for during the final year of training, whether or not the qualification was actually awarded. The training specialisms are captured by means of INSEE's classification of training specialisms: NSF 230 to 234 for training courses in construction and public works occupations, NSF 221 or 334 (excl. tourism) for training courses in hotel, catering and food occupations and NSF 326 and training courses at level 5 or higher and other NSF codes including the terms "information technology", "digital systems", "automation" (excl. NSF 2010), "telecommunications", etc. for IT occupations.

As far as the jobs held are concerned, the classification used is the DARES classification of job families (FAP 2009).

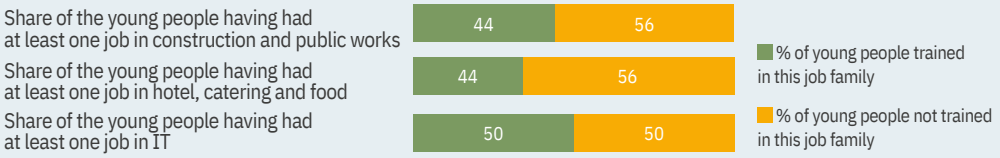
Génération

Among the shortage occupations, those in construction and public works stand out for their capacity to integrate young people on a long-term basis. However, not all new entrants stay in these occupations. What are the factors that facilitate integration in the long term, as reflected in the fact of having held a job in construction and public works and holding another as the last job held? The fact of having completed training in a construction and public works occupation seems to play a role: 84% of the young people who had had at least one job in the sector stayed in it when they had been trained in these occupations (cf. Box 4). For all that, even young people trained in other occupations often remained in these jobs (74%) during the three years of the observation period.

However, the training received, whether or not it is related to the occupation, is not the only factor in play, and the conditions of the first job held seem to be more decisive. Those young people starting out on fixed-term contracts and/or in involuntary part-time employment were more likely to leave these

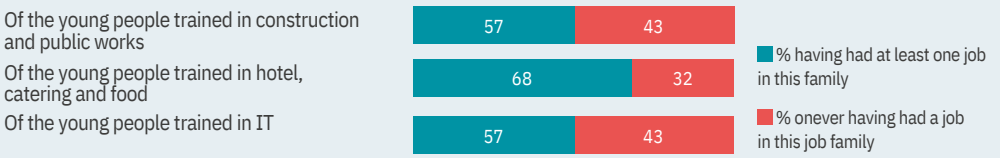
3 The training-employment relationship in the shortage occupations observed

Share of the young people employed in the occupation with and without occupation-specific training



Example: 44% of the young people having had at least one job in construction and public works had been trained in this job family.
Scope: young people who had been employed in one of the three job families during the first three years of their working lives.
Source: *Génération 2017,* 2020 survey.

Share of the young people trained in one of the occupations and having had at least one job in it in the 3 years



Source: *Génération 2017*, 2020 survey.
Scope: Young people who had been employed in one of the three job families during the first three years of their working lives.
Example: 57% of the young people trained in construction and public works occupations had at least one job in this family.

Génération

occupations than the others. Thus of the young people trained in these occupations, 80% of those who had had a job in the construction and public works sector but did not stay in the sector started on a fixed-term contract, compared with 52% of the young people who stayed in it. Similarly, 7 % of the young people with training who quit this job family started out in involuntary part-time employment, compared with 1% of those who stayed. For those young people who had pursued other training courses, the share of involuntary part-time working and fixed-term contracts among those who quit these occupations are also higher.

An anchor in the HRA professions only for young people who are trained there

When they worked in hotel, catering and food occupations, the young people often did so soon after completion of their training. For three quarters of them, it was actually where they found their first jobs. However, they did not necessarily establish themselves in this job family on a long-term basis, since 33% of them spent less than half their time in employment there. The hotel, catering and food occupations provide employment for large swathes of the population of young labour market entrants but do not make prior relevant training a prerequisite. In total, they recruit 1.7 times more young people than the total number of young people with training in these occupations. And, logically, the share of young people trained in these occupations among all those who have worked in the sector is only 34% (cf. Box 3).

However, if the hotel, catering and food occupations constitute a privileged pathway into work for the young people at the beginning of their working lives, in reality they occupy a very different place in their trajectories depending on their training. The majority of the young people who had undergone training in these occupations found employment in them and established themselves: only 32% of them had never worked in the sector and, of those who entered these occupations, 82% remained there on a long-term basis over the three years of the observation period (cf. Boxes 3 and 4).

On the other hand, although many young people without training in the hotel, catering and food occupations did find jobs in the

4 Share of the young people who remained in or quit a shortage occupation, depending on whether or not they were trained in the occupation

	Of the young people having had at least on job in construction and public works		Of the young people having had at least one hob in hotel, catering and food		Of the young people having had at least one job in IT	
	trained*	**not trained***	**trained***	**not trained****	**trained***	**not trained****
% of young people who remained in this occupational field*	**84**	**74**	**82**	**55**	**93**	**79**
Level of qualification (% in column)	**16**	**26**	**18**	**45**	**7**	**21**

*Trained or not trained in the occupation in question. **Young people who remained in this occupational field: young people whose last job was in the sphere *** Young people who quit this occupational field: young people who had at least one job in the field but whose last known job was not in the field.

Source: Céreq, *Génération 2017* survey.
Scope: young people who had been employed in one of the three occupational fields during the first three years of their working lives.
Example: 84% of the young people trained in construction and public works occupations remained in this occupational field.

Génération

sector, they were more likely to quit them: this applies to 45% of them. They were also more exposed to less good employment conditions when they were recruited. Involuntary part-time working is much more prevalent in the hotel, catering and food occupations than in the other occupations, but those without relevant training were much more likely to be affected. Thus only one person in two without training worked full-time (compared with four out of every five of those with training), while one in five without training found themselves in involuntary part-time work, compared with only one in twelve with training.

These results can be explained partly by the heterogeneity of the hotel, catering and food occupations in terms of their positioning vis-à-vis the recruitment of young people. In this respect, the food occupations stand apart from the other occupations in the job family in adopting the logic of vocational labour markets. In these occupations, the relationship between occupation and training is very strong: 83% of the young people having worked in a food occupation had completed a training course in these occupations. And they tend to put down roots primarily in this area: 74% of the young people having held at least one job in the food occupations stayed there when they had undergone training in those occupations.

IT occupations are attractive and selective

For their part, the IT occupations attract skilled workers from a wide range of backgrounds, since they are divided equally between those who have just completed an IT training programme and those from other specialisms. The young people who began their working lives in one of these occupations stayed there on a long-term basis; this applied to 93% of those leaving education with an IT qualification and to 79% of the others (cf. Box 4). Whether or not they had relevant training, they all began their careers on similar terms that were among the best that can be observed for the young people who entered the labour market in 2017, whether in terms of the share of permanent contracts (73%), of full-time jobs (96%) or of salary level.

These are attractive occupations; paradoxically, however, a high share (43% - cf. Box 3) of the young people trained in IT specialisms did not find employment in the IT job family. There are several possible explanations for this situation. The selectiveness of the recruitment process led to the exclusion of the majority of the young people who had undergone the training but had not acquired a formal qualification in an IT specialism: 80% of this group did not find work in these occupations (compared

with 31% of those who had obtained their IT qualification). The gendered image of these occupations also seems to be a factor, since 53% of the women with relevant training dd not work in an IT occupation, compared with only 41% of the men. Finally, what might seem to be a "flight" phenomenon has to be put into perspective in view of the fact that some of the young people with IT training would have found employment in related occupations that make use of IT skills (R&D technicians and engineers, installation and maintenance technicians and so on).

Conclusion

On the basis of these three examples, what relationships can be identified between the young entrants' trajectories and the tensions in the labour market? In the early years of their working lives, the young people worked in occupations identified as shortage occupations. They are even overrepresented relative to the other age groups in two of the three job families investigated, namely hotel, catering and food and IT. For all that, observation of the young people's education to work transition by job family does not provide a simple, unequivocal answer to the problem of shortage occupations.

In particular, a response based on training is not an easy undertaking and reflects the complexity of the link between education/training completed and occupation [3]. After all, several dimensions of this relationship have to be taken into account. Firstly, not all the individuals wish to work in the occupations for which they trained; this may be due to the difficult employment and/or working conditions associated with these occupations, to educational choices that were imposed rather than chosen, to the young people's personal choices or to other factors. Secondly, some of the jobs observed are unskilled jobs that do not therefore require any specific prior training. Thus, by way of example, only 33% of the young people who had worked as unskilled manual workers in construction and public works had undertaken specific training. These occupations, like those in IT, recruit, acculturate and assimilate young people who have not been trained in them. Thus training does not seem to be the only dimension in play. In the construction and public works occupations, it is rather the quality of employment conditions on recruitment that turns out to be crucial in retaining young people without training and attracting those with training.

The question of whether enough young people are being trained is, therefore, a complex one to resolve. Thus in the hotel, catering and food occupations, the number of trained workers is considerably lower than the number of young people who have worked in one of these occupations, reflecting the role of providing new entrants with their first jobs that these occupations have played for a long time. This being so, it can be hypothesised that it is above all the low labour costs that are crucial. Nevertheless, the training problem is not entirely absent; for some of the young people trained in these occupations, it is their ambition in life to establish themselves on a long-term basis in enterprises that are willing to forge lasting relationships, which makes initial training a real issue, as in the emblematic case of the food occupations. Observation of the IT occupations shows that, in this occupational field where skilled labour is in high demand, obtaining a formal qualification is also an issue, since those young people who had failed to obtain their IT qualification were not recruited for these occupations, since recruiters give priority to applicants with qualifications, whether or not those qualifications are specific to IT.

All things considered, it is clear from the analysis of these specific cases that, in order to be able to make recommendations on how these shortage occupations might resolve their labour shortages by looking at initial training, any potential strategy will have to be considered in the light of young people's labour market trajectories, on the one hand, and of companies' recruitment conditions, on the other.

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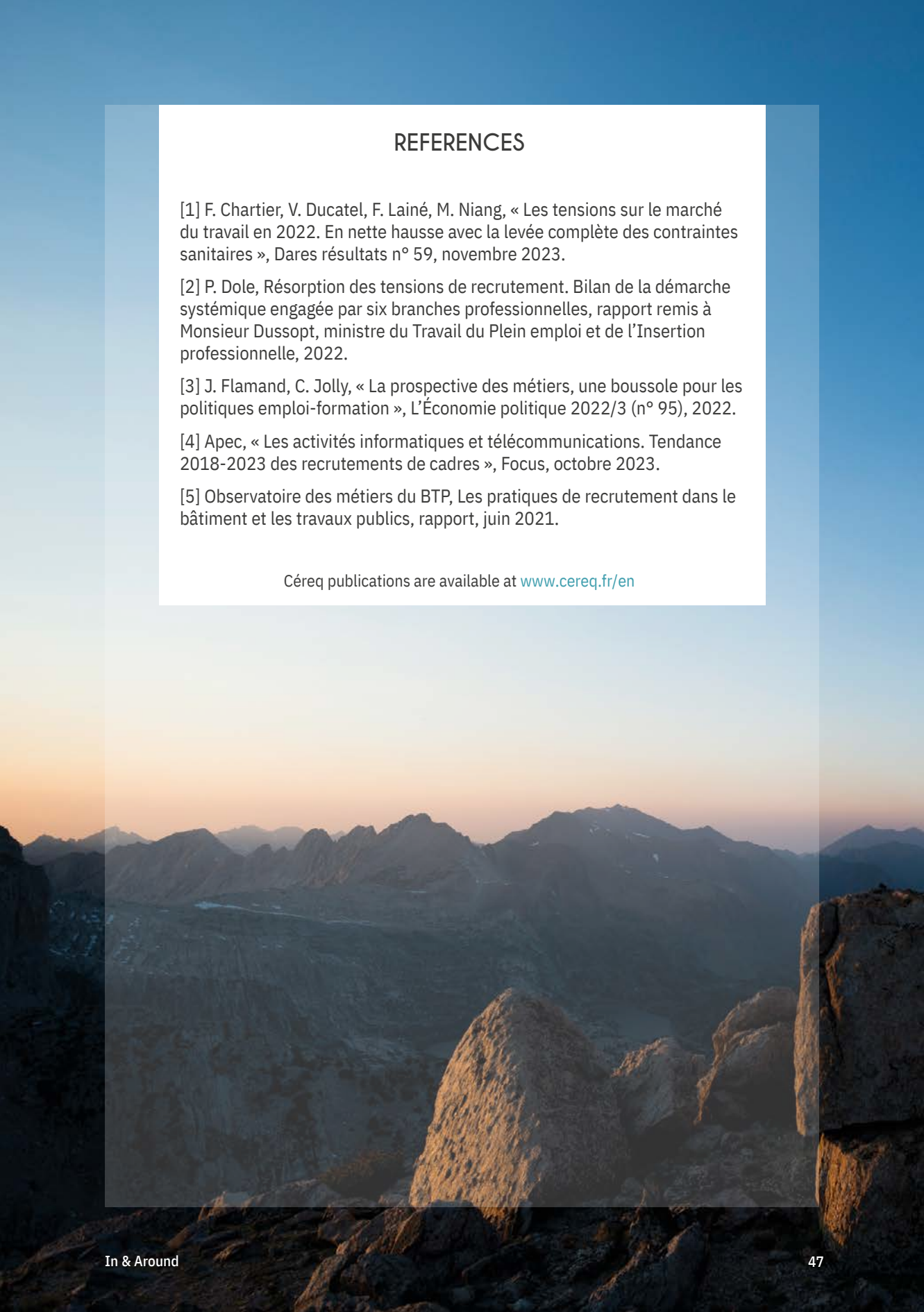

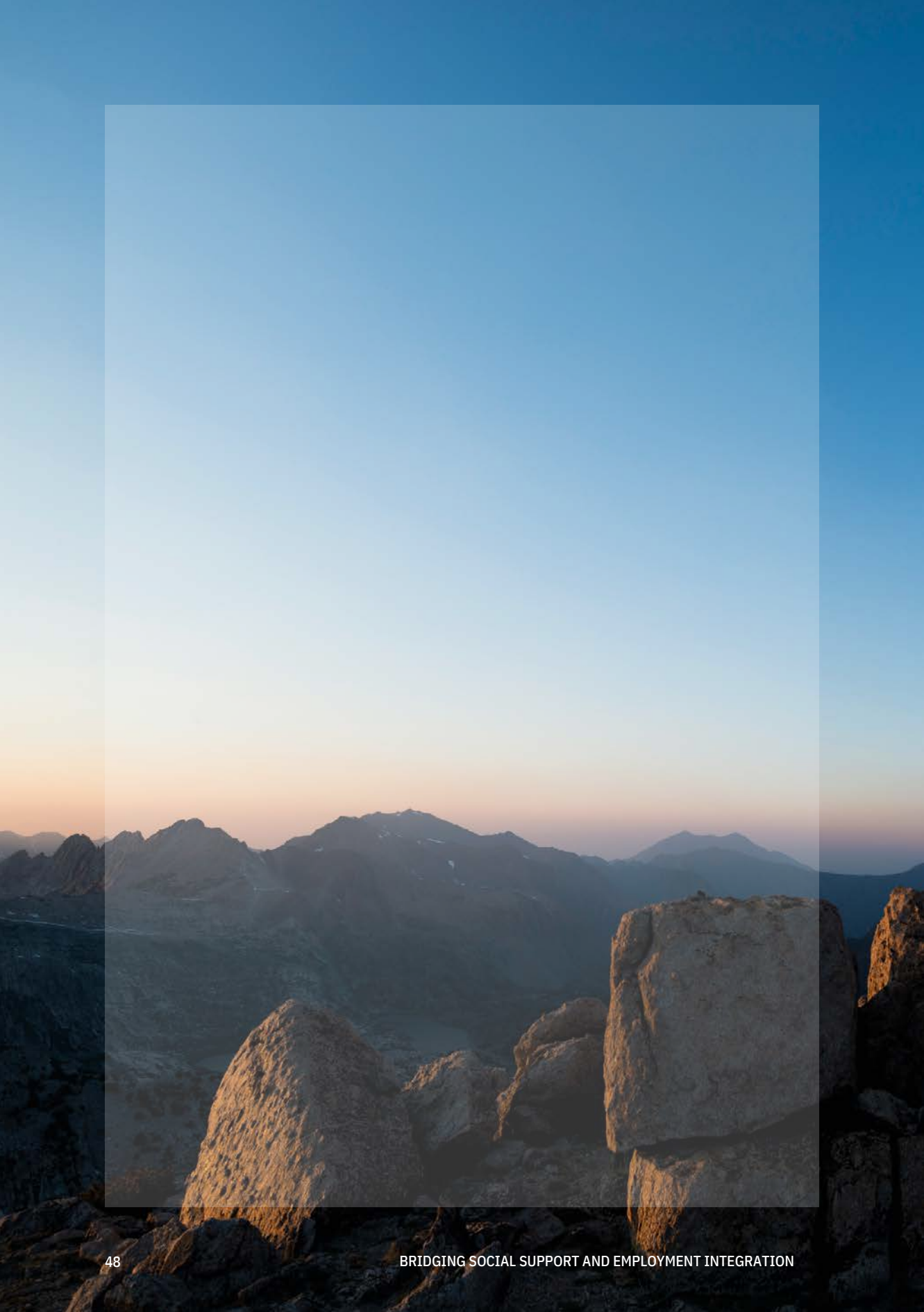

BILT Expert Group on building and construction: Tackling global challenges through TVET innovation

WHO?

WHEN?

WHAT?

In today's rapidly changing world, TVET[1] plays a pivotal role in equipping individuals with the skills and competencies to learn, work and live. However, the evolving industry landscape, marked by technological advancements, environmental sustainability imperatives and demographic shifts, calls for a re-evaluation of TVET approaches, particularly in the building and construction sector.

From 2024 to 2025, the Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT) project is convening its third Expert Group; this time focusing on new qualifications and competencies for building and construction in the three BILT regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe.

With a thematic lens on digitalization, greening and international migration, the Expert Group investigates the approaches to ensure innovative and future-oriented TVET that is attuned to individual, labour market and societal demands.
Under the leadership of ConCOVE Tūhura of New Zealand, supported by the Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Qualifications (Céreq) of France, and the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON), the BILT Expert Group is implementing various activities:

- Facilitating both online and in-person meetings to foster dialogue and knowledge exchange among TVET stakeholders in the focus regions.
- Conducting mapping exercises to identify current and future skills needs and trends in the building and construction sector across the regions.
- Identifying and documenting initiatives to be published as Innovation and Learning Practices by UNESCO-UNEVOC.
- Preparing a synthesis report with actionable recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners in TVET.
- Establishing connections with relevant national, regional and international organizations to ensure alignment and effective dissemination of project outcomes.

Through the concerted efforts of the Expert Group members, the BILT project aims to enhance the relevance of TVET in building and construction and thereby contribute to the transition to more digital, green and inclusive economies and societies. These activities will support the implementation of the UNESCO Strategy for TVET 2022–2029 and the UNESCO-UNEVOC medium-term strategy 2024–2026.

Céreq Added Value to the Building and Construction Expert Group

Céreq has been involved in BILT project since its inception in 2017. In the year 2020, it was commissioned to lead a first international expert group on new qualifications and competences for future-oriented VET focusing on advocacy role of business membership organizations (BMOs), trade unions, joint organizations or chambers of commerce, industry or crafts. Main objective was to let discuss and exchange experience among the involved experts in view to come to a common synthesis in regard to the issue of the identification of new qualification and competences in the process of standard and curriculum design in experts' respective countries.

The BILT project has proved to be a relevant environment for deepening knowledge of other countries' TVET systems and facilitating the exchange of information on the main developments in VET in the three world regions concerned: Africa, Asia and Europe. Céreq actively contributed to unleash mutual understanding between practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers at different latitudes and to share basic concepts on which this new cooperation on the building and construction sector is built. Among the previous achievements worth to mention the systematization work and general guidelines provided in the manuals 'New qualifications and competencies for future-oriented TVET systems[2]' (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021).

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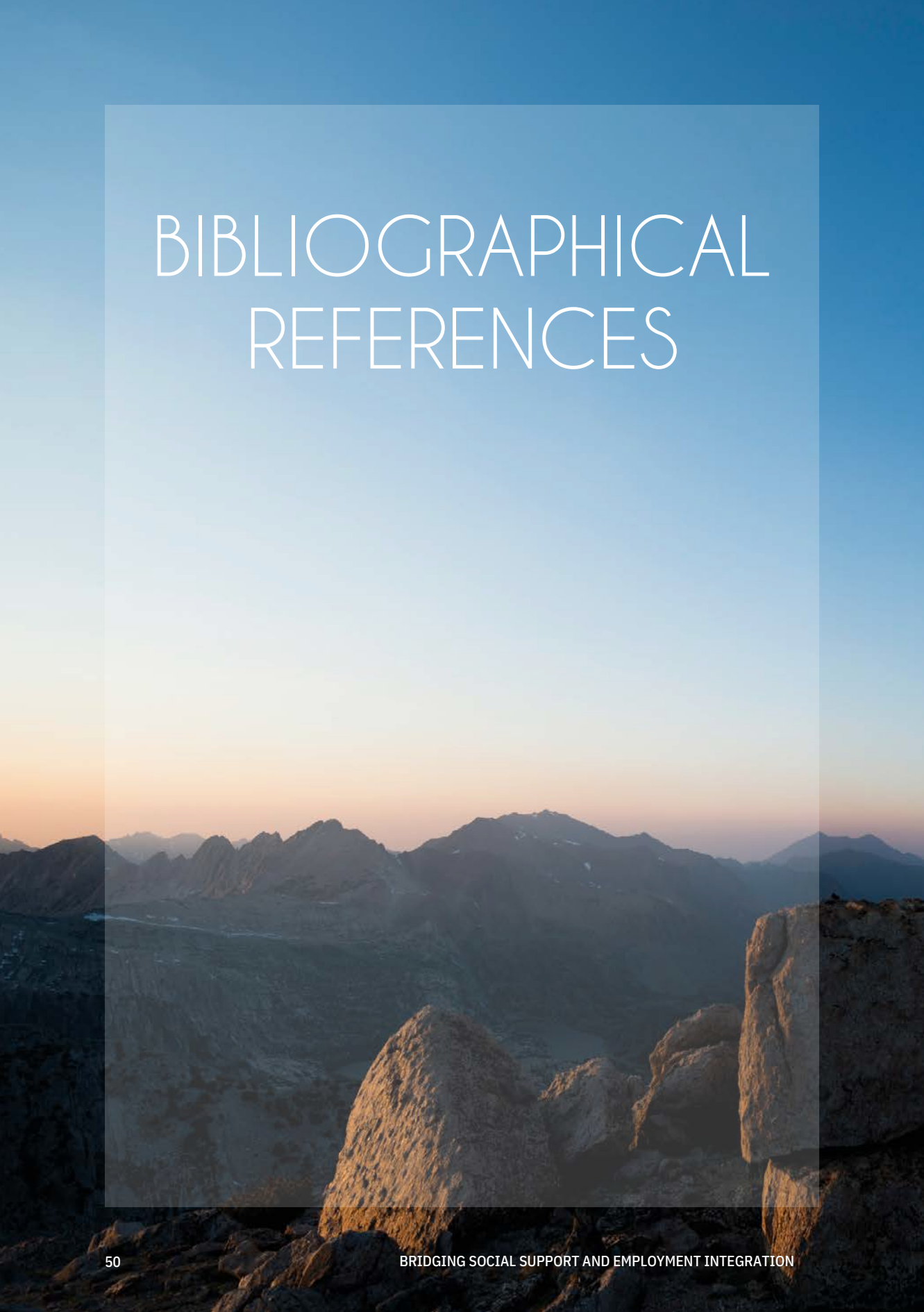

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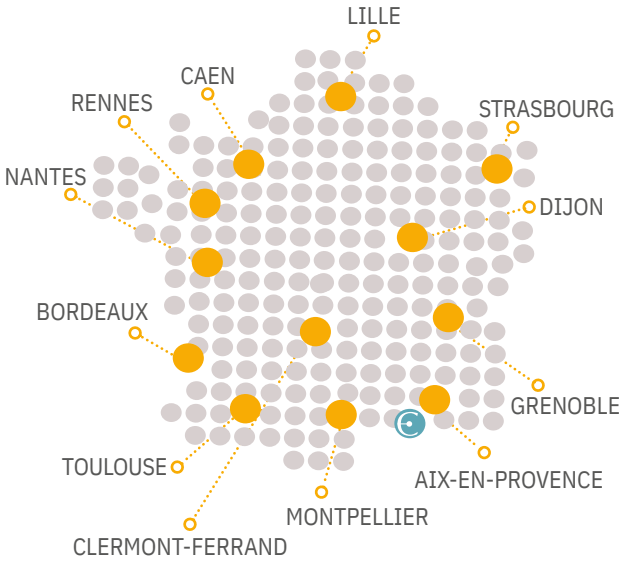

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